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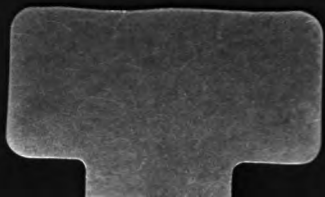
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# MORNING CLOUDS

Being Divers Poems

BY

HENRY BELLYSE BAILDON, B.A. CANTAB.

AUTHOR OF "ROSAMUND," ETC.



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FOR

DAVID DOUGLAS

LONDON . . .	HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND Co.
CAMBRIDGE . . .	MACMILLAN AND Co.
GLASGOW . . .	JAMES MACLEHOSE.

## To Fame.

*O HAUGHTY mistress, by a shadowed door,  
I wait and listen for thy feet within;  
I hear the tread of clowns upon thy floor,  
Brattle of warriors, talkers' wordy din:  
These dine with these, and pass, and come no more.  
Not like to one of these would I come in.*

*I stand without, as patient-proud as thou,  
Who may'st not hear my knocking for the din;—  
And half I hope thou wilt not hear me now,  
Or, hearing, wilt not pause to let me in;  
Still am I bound, as by a knightly vow,  
Once having wooed, to perish or to win.*

*Nay; not as these would I to banquet come  
To swagger it a season in thy hall,  
Guest for a night at thy symposium,  
To pass at cloaked Oblivion's silent call;—  
Nay, mistress, for my soul is mettlesome,  
I come thy lover, if I come at all.*

*So shalt thou hide me in a curtained place,  
And whisper of my name in gentle wise,  
Making clear twilight with thy shadowed face,—  
A chastened splendour from thy reverent eyes;  
And thus, apart from clamour or disgrace,  
Shall I abide in all men's memories.*



*Thus would I have it, though I often doubt  
It may not be. Though men have made thee Pope  
To canonize or curse us, and thy shout  
Hold for an oracle, thou dost but grope.  
But I, I am content to be without,  
For still I love the shadow and the hope.*

*And sweet the alley here wherein I wait,  
So dear that I forget whereto it goes,  
And wander careless to thine outer gate,  
And tread upon the deep-mossed graves of those  
Who died without thy door disconsolate—  
Perchance to share their reverent repose!*

*Or, it may be, if thou relent at last,  
And pity me upon thy doorway stones,  
That, opening for me, thou shalt pause aghast  
At my dead face, and make repentant moans,—  
Bear me within thy mausoleum vast,  
And make thy vain lament above my bones.*

### NOTE.

THESE Poems are all published for the first time, with the exception of "Alone in London" and "The Bee in the Wheat," which have appeared in *Cornhill Magazine* and *The Examiner* respectively. Two of the pieces were suggested by pictures, viz., "Near the End of the West" and "The Shadow of a Great Rock," the former being a picture by Mr. Noble, exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy in 1875, the latter being an imaginative water-colour sketch by Mr. H. H. Nisbet.



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## Alone in London.

**B**Y her fault or by ill-fate,  
Left in great London, desolate  
Of helpers and of comforters,  
Without one heart to beat with hers,—  
Without one hand in tenderness  
And sympathy her hand to press,—  
A lone soul, left dispassionate,  
Without one link of love or hate.

From her lodging poor and bare,  
And high up in the smoke-dim air,  
With cheerless heart, with aimless feet,  
She descendeth to the street,  
Where the people, coming, going,  
Ceaseless as a river's flowing,  
Seemed as imperturbable,  
As though no heart-warm tear could well  
Into those dry eyes,—no sob  
Ever could those set lips rob  
Of their sternness,—with blind stare  
They passed a woman in despair.

A

With hopeless heart, with weary feet,  
She wanders on from street to street,  
    Restless as a withered leaf  
Fallen from its parent tree ;  
    Goaded by a sleepless grief,  
Dogged by dull perplexity,  
Passing along, in dumb despair,  
Deserted street and silent square.

Into the shadow black and deep  
    Of a doorway she doth shrink,  
Crouching there, she cannot weep,  
    Waiting there, she cannot think.  
As a tide on river wall  
    Lappeth ever wearily,  
Round her soul despair doth call  
    Constantly and drearily ;  
As round ancient gable peaks  
A ghostly night-wind wails and shrieks,  
So again and yet again  
Rise the bitter gusts of pain.

Steps are heard upon the stone :  
One cometh down the street alone,  
And upon the footsteps follow,  
'Mid the dark roofs, echoes hollow.  
On he comes, all unaware  
Of the dark misery lurking there ;  
He pauseth not, but passes on,—  
She speaketh not, and he is gone.

She thinks, "He would but reckon me  
The vile thing that I would not be."

Silence again. A wild intent  
The pang woke in her as it went ;  
She goes, nought with her, down the street,  
But haunting echoes of her feet.

She stands where, far below, is heard  
The river's one unchanging word ;  
She stands and listens, and doth know,  
Beneath the waters seaward go.  
Like an incantation drear  
She hears them wash by wharf and pier.

Will none come to save her yet ?  
Her foot is on the parapet ;  
Upward to a starless heaven  
One last, hopeless look is given :  
On each hand stretches black and far  
The line of roofs irregular,  
And beneath, a vast night-wall,  
Based in gloom funereal.

The blackness floweth up to meet  
The wanderer's world-weary feet,  
And afar, below it all,  
Still the river seems to call,



"Mortal, since thou wouldst not live,  
Come, for I have rest to give ;  
Over thee and thy dark woes  
Silently my waves shall close,  
Spreading changeless over all,  
Like a mighty funeral pall."

A moment, agonized and mute,  
Rigid, yet irresolute  
She stands ; then, with a bitter cry,  
Rent from her soul's last agony,  
Sheer down the black abyss she falls ;—

The river washes by its walls.

## Songs of the River.

### *I. RILL.*

**L**EAPING in laughter,  
Forth free to the light,  
My course shall hereafter  
Be silvery bright.

Farewell, dark fountain,  
Now am I free !  
Farewell, father mountain,  
I hurry from thee.

Welcome, soft mosses,  
On I must pass !  
See, my wave tosses  
Aside the long grass.

Ho ! ye stout rushes,  
Ye cannot stay  
My strong wave ; it gushes  
Past you, away.

So, haughty boulder,  
You stand in my path :  
Round your rough shoulder  
I foam in my wrath.

When I'm a river  
Such stones shall trace  
Not the least quiver  
On my calm face.

Cruel peat, browning  
My current so clear !  
High black banks frowning !—  
Life's growing drear.

Would I had never  
Leapt from the hill !  
Oh, to be ever  
An innocent rill !

*II. BROOK.*

Terribly swift,  
Irresistibly strong,  
I with my gift  
To the sea burst along,  
Swifter and swifter, on to the space  
Where parting hills let the sun smite on my face.

Then, dazzled and dizzy, leap  
Over the sudden steep,  
    Down the sheer fall;  
Feeling no banks' restraint  
'Mid the mad freedom, faint,  
    Shivered to small  
Swiftress-rent foam and spray,  
Stealing my strength away,  
    Loudly I fall.

Oh, this dark prison-pool,  
Of writhing passion full,  
Passion plunged from the light  
Down to despair's black night!  
Lonely and stunned I lie,  
Seeing not sun or sky.

Vainly ye dark rocks clutch;  
    Onward I hie;—  
Ye build not tombs for such  
    Spirits as I.

Over you, round you, between and under you,  
I wear you, smooth you, hollow and sunder you;  
Though you fret me to foam, yet my waters are wasted  
    not,—  
I drink of the rapture your stillness has tasted not.

I must haste, I must haste, I must haste to the sea ;  
I must haste to the lands that are waiting for me ;  
I must go, I must leave thee, thou spray-jewelled fern,  
Farewell, ye bright pebbles, I may not return.

. . . . .  
Loud sing I, that my song may cheer  
The thirsty pastures, when they hear ;  
Fear not, ye fields, for deep and strong  
My growing waters burst along,  
And my broad-moving tide doth cover  
Mighty rocks and boulders over.  
The mountains that confine my track  
My dauntless shout is warning back ;  
The sky is growing vast and round,  
Unbroken by a ridge or bound.

. . . . .  
Alas ! where are they gone,  
The strength, speed, and desire of former days ?  
My languid waters whimper on  
Along divided ways.

Alas ! where are they gone,  
The sweep, the dash, the shout, the rush, the roar ?  
The voice that called upon  
The far plains calls no more.

Above me, *then* the sky  
Flowed, like a river, 'twixt opposing banks  
Of firs that silently  
Moved on in serried ranks.

No hills bar out the light ;  
From east to west the great sun, shadowless,  
Doth journey, and his might  
My faint streams doth oppress.

Alas ! I am undone ;  
No channel can I find,  
At every step I sink,  
I see no more the sun,  
I feel no more the wind  
But feel the black earth drink  
My waters down,—I think  
All life and hope are done.

I wander in darkness,  
The earth-channels perplex me ;  
I am caught in the rootnets,  
They hinder and vex me.  
The mosses make me captive,  
I am imprisoned in the peat,  
My strength they have divided,  
And entangled my feet.

. . . . .  
Without current I move,  
Drop by drop I descend ;  
Who knows ? I may pierce through  
To light in the end.

With a fearful hope I tremble,  
In the dark we re-assemble ;—  
Do I dream, or do I know  
There is faithful rock below ?

My lost streams are moving and meeting,  
My waters are gathering and growing,  
Sobbing in passionate greeting,  
Singing in gladness of going.

Fed at each earth-crack and channel,  
Strengthened at fissure and runnel,  
Moving with confluent music,  
The heavy earth-darkness I tunnel.

Oh, when from my trance shall I waken ?  
Will the light break above me or under ?  
Already I feel the earth shaken,  
As through the steep darkness I thunder.

In vain my untiring wave searches ;  
No light breaks above or below !

I have found the fine roots of the birches,  
And they are above me, I know.

O joyance ! O radiance ! O splendour !  
This sudden leap into the light !  
I am dazzled, although with care tender  
The birches spread over my sight  
Their tresses, for curtain and veil,  
Of a green that is golden and pale.

*III. STREAM.*

The mosses have come down to drink  
On my very brink ;  
Ferns, in shaking, glisten,  
As though come to listen  
What I think.

The bramble-sprays will lean across  
And, from moss to moss,  
Would weave bridges living,  
But they miss in giving  
Hands across.

The hazels stoop from high to see  
Shadows dance in me,—  
Shadows of their making ;  
How they dance, in breaking  
Under me !

The glen is mine, is mine for song,  
As I flow along ;  
Long-robed larches yonder  
Skyward point, and ponder  
On my song.



## Sonnet.—"Separation."

I N this earth-life stern space debars  
From meeting kindred soul and soul ;  
A chilly mist of distance mars  
Life's prospect, breaking up the whole  
Great range to isolated peak  
And solitary summit, weak  
And sad in loneliness of lot  
And unity of being ; strong,  
Feeling its great roots grope along  
To meeting, where vain speech is not.

But, as when morning breezes sweep  
The pale mist-sea from vale and glen,—  
Where all night long the vapours sleep,—  
Revealing to the watcher's ken,  
From peak to plain, th' unbroken whole ;  
So unto each it shall be, when  
Death's cold wind passes o'er the soul.

To a Cabbage Leaf.

O LEAF, vulgar and homely,  
How art thou become so comely?  
Proudest lady may not wear  
Brighter jewels in her hair.  
For, gathering into trembling spheres  
The Morning's gift of happy tears,  
Thou art decked all price beyond,  
With liquid pearl and diamond.

Nature, who is but a sign  
Of a Wisdom more divine,  
Sends to me this lesson great,  
Whereon I may meditate  
(Lacking human speech, she tells  
Only silent parables),  
"On the lowly heart and true  
Falls the spiritual dew."

### The Bee and the Wheat.—An Apology.

A YELLOW bee went booming  
Over the whitening wheat ;  
Her way she knew, and straight she flew  
Home with her burden sweet.

And the ears, as they rustled faintly,  
Appeared in accents saintly  
This burden to repeat :  
“ More useful are we than honey-bee,  
Though she labours long and merrily.”

“ Yes,” each said, his confident head  
Leaning towards his neighbour ;  
“ We alone are the givers of bread,  
The rewarders of all men’s labour ;  
To baron and boor,  
To cotter, to king,  
To the rich, to the poor,  
Our blessing we bring,  
More useful by far than this sonorous thing.

The bee swung high  
The tall hedge over,  
And hummed her reply  
As she skimmed the clover.

"My harvest may be small,  
Yet is it far sweeter,  
Yielding more delight  
To high or lowly eater.  
You give food to man,  
But it lacketh savour ;  
Scant the gift I bring,  
But of delicious flavour."

"Thanks to thee for answer thine,  
O most sapient hummer,  
To each prosy comer  
'Twill be answer mine !"  
Said a singer ;  
"When men dine  
I would pour the wine,  
I would be the honey-bringer."

## Near the End of the West.

### I.

**A** PATIENT toiler, Time's mild veteran,  
He sits, beset with frame and beam and shaft,  
Caged in the gear of his monotonous craft,  
Imprisoned there like some injurious man,  
While mellow-dusted radiance has begun  
To thrust broad level spoke athwart the room—  
West of bland light across an umber gloom—  
That casts on wall and floor a slanted plan  
Of that erect machine's square scaffolding ;  
And, as in reverent pity, does illumine  
The worker's pausing hand and pallid brow,  
Noble with Thought's and Sorrow's chiselling,  
To face intent, unmoved, it seems to cling,  
And whispers, " Final peace approacheth now."

## Near the End of the West.

### 2.

**A** WASTED hand with veiny rivulet ;  
A brow pathetic, as some mountain's head,—  
Whereon the violent tempests struggling tread,  
Whose patient front the restless torrents fret,  
Where many thunders have for combat met,  
Nor roused it from majestic dumb restraint,  
Whereon the snow's chill mitre oft is set.—  
Meekly he works, dull Labour's patient saint,  
Unsorrowful, unfearful, unelate ;  
In modest hope of peace, in faith resigned,  
Devoid of gratulation or complaint ;  
Experience' scholar, Life's sad graduate,  
A captive, being bound to humble fate,—  
A victor, keeping an unconquered mind.

### B

## The Water of Leith at Coltbridge.

### AN UNFINISHED SKETCH.

CURVE rightward shuts the glassy reach  
Of the river, white in the evening light ;  
Where the first of that file of stately beech  
In mid-stream plunges his stem downright—  
Plunges his shadow-dark stem without quiver  
In the wan river.

Thereby a willow overleans  
To see that fountain-wise,—most pale of greens,  
Her foliage falls,—no shimmer  
Makes her fair image dimmer  
Than she herself is.  
Surely the elf is  
Wondering, pondering, gloating  
On her fair self, that seems to be floating  
Up stream with her,  
In a dream with her ;  
While below there are born of the breeze  
Rounded ripples that make, at their ease,  
Lazy lashes from boughs of the trees,  
And entangle  
In indolent wrangle  
The top twigs of that beech  
With four beeches, that each,

With proud slant  
The green edge overpeer, emulant  
Of near willows, that lean more confiding  
From out their thin tremulous hiding  
Of green flame, calm ascending,  
Whose image, a cascade descending,  
Falls through  
A faint blue.

Ugh! ugh! it is blurred  
By a frothy and feculent curd,—  
A sour, crusted scum,—  
O sweet muse, I am dumb!



### Love and Passion.

A WIND is Passion whispering soft  
About the beech's silken fane;  
Passion is wind that wars aloft  
'Mid pine-tops tossed in stormy pain;  
Love is the circumambient air  
Whereof we drink our being unaware.

A stream is Passion musical  
'Neath flickering of its golden netting;  
Like Passion is the torrent's fall,  
The waters dark to snow-foam fretting;  
Love is the wide, unrippled lake  
Whereon the hills new-polished beauty take.

If Passion's gusts go by us twain,  
Sister, and leave us unremoved,  
Not therefore let our hearts complain  
That Passion impotent has proved !  
For combat-strengthened we shall grow  
More fully Love's eternal strength to know.

## The Shadow of a Great Rock in a Weary Land.

AT morn the great sun roused him from his rest,  
As with a blow a tyrant wakes his slave  
And stands above him, merciless and strong;—  
Woke too his weary beast, that waking sighed  
In inarticulate agony; and the man  
Muttered or muffled curse or desperate prayer  
From parchèd throat and dry, adherent lips.

Shrunk as a mummied face, his water-skin  
Lay there beside him; reaching it he drank  
The last warm mouthful.

For ever with him moved the vigilant sun,  
Splendid, imperious, intolerable;  
Moved, too, the illimitable level disc  
Of glaring sand that like a furnace-mouth  
Dazzled and scorched beneath him, while the beast  
Strode stealthily as Time, with shagged head  
Slung out before her, going where she would.

On head and shoulders of the man the heat  
Beat pitilessly, sucking up his life

Like ravenous beast, and as the wretch went on  
His eyeballs sweated in the crimson caves  
Of his closed lids ; or, if he opened these,  
The sun-glare smote between them like a sword.  
And still the far rim of the desert lay  
All smooth before him, moving in hot swound  
Of desperate endurance.

After noon

The far horizon showed one shining notch,  
Where, like a tooth, a distant rock uprose.  
Then the keen shock of hope revived the man  
To sharper sense of pain that drowsy grew  
At its monotonous post.

As insolent, cruel man

Buffets a weeping woman in the face,  
And wrenches back her tear-damp hands to gaze  
Triumphantly tyrannical thereon,  
The westering sun, slow-veering, scorched and dazzled  
The traveller, who perforce at intervals  
Gazed on the growing rock, but marked the tremble  
Of the tired camel's tread. Their shadow lagged  
Behind them, as a weary child hangs back  
Behind his listening mother.  
But still no bigger than a couching beast,  
With rude, humped body glistening in the light,  
Curled round upon its shadow, seemed the rock.

Beside the prone dead beast he stood,—had drunk  
The scanty moisture that her belly yielded,—

Yet saw the rock no taller than a tent.  
A shadow passed the sun, and great wings waved  
Above them, poising there reluctantly.  
And the man fled straight onward, with no look  
Behind him cast, but knew the leprous head  
Of the foul bird was blotched and splashed with blood.

. . . . .

He sleeps beneath the shadow,—like a wing  
Stretched out beyond him,—and the rude rock stoops  
Above him, like a savage thing that loves  
And watches. And the slender rill goes by  
With gentle rustling to its sandy bourne,  
Content to die thus early, having lived  
A life beneficent, as weakling babes  
Stay but awhile to teach us tenderness,  
And then pass from us.

Ah ! what dreams are his  
Whose swart, black-bearded face unconscious droops  
Upon his bosom? Doth the tyrannous day  
Pursue him still through fiery fields of sleep?  
Or makes the murmuring water and vast shade  
Cool palm-lit valleys and green paths for him?

Rude rock, bend over him ! great shade, grow on  
Till thy slim spire doth touch the eastern sky,  
And in a vaster shadow thou art lost !

Not seldom like a fiery desert day  
Is our existence here ; yet all may rest  
At last beneath thy shadow, merciful Death !

## Love's Day.

WHAT is morning unto me  
But opening of thine eyes, my love ?  
'Tis not the breath of Phœbus' steeds  
That, like a tide of incense, speeds  
Up those blue-fainting skies, my love ;  
'Tis bliss prophetic that precedes  
The opening of thine eyes, my love.

What is noontide unto me  
But symbol of thy smiles, my love ?  
These are not vapour-couches soft  
For pure cloud-spirits poised aloft,  
Nor sun-bewildered isles, my love ;  
These are my fancies wooing soft,  
The splendours of thy smiles, my love.

What is evening unto me  
But thy most sweet farewell, my love ?  
Not purple clouds of violet bloom  
Corrosive brightness doth consume,  
O'er climbing steep and fell, my love ;  
'Tis my proud passion 'neath the doom  
Of thy too sweet farewell, my love.

What the starlight whispers me  
Doth concern thy soul, my love ;  
And star and planet in their places,  
Swift travelling untrodden spaces  
To their appointed goal, my love,  
Do whisper of thy spirit's graces,  
The secrets of thy soul, my love.

What is moonlight unto me  
But memory of thee, my love ?  
Not curded floes of cloud in air  
Most azure, every fracture fair  
To silver, do I see, my love ;  
'Tis my rapt spirit floating there,  
'Mid memories of thee, my love.

### Up the Firth.

THE level firth lies calm 'neath broken cloud  
That curtains all the sunlight, though the breeze  
Abrades all shadowed stretches of grey sea,  
Whereon are graven silver hieroglyphs  
That move not, slender curvage serpentine.  
Lo, yonder coast is blue with solemn dusk,  
And bounded with meek silver by the sea  
Abiding clear along its swerving shore,  
Wistful as smile about Madonna's mouth,  
And patient as the pleading of her eyes.

Broad sun-shafts lean on veiled hill and wan,  
Far flats of crispèd waters. Suddenly one  
Strikes yonder creek to golden burnishment  
And all the bay's a-glister like a snake ;  
So there the light delays elate and calm,  
Conquering, content, a narrow paradise.

Gray and erect, mid-channel, stands a brig  
With grave and sentinel fidelity  
Remaining silent watcher of the coasts,  
Its topmost spars criss-crossed upon the pale,  
Abashed cloud-distance, vaguely luminous,  
Smooored northward by a brown, low, brooding smoke,

Pillared on sooty columns, and beset  
Seaward with serried masts. The morning breeze,  
Sweet missionary of delight and health,  
Breathes vainly on that cloud continual  
That vests the city in its common curse,  
Chimney and steeple, mansion, factory ;  
Yes, vainly as a pure and wifely hand  
Is laid upon a murderer's darkened brow.  
And, underneath, the pallid workers go,  
Debased, dull serfs of loud machinery,  
Immured alive in blank-walled factories,  
Bastilles of Labour built by Capital.

O God, who makest earth so very fair  
That I entrancèd watch this newest day,  
Fresh revelation from the infinite  
Of beauty unbeheld, and note apart,  
In secret awe and agony of joy,  
Each wondrous vacillation of the light,  
How vainly is such daily festival spread  
For eyes that see not, hearts that do not love !  
Hast Thou forgotten them ? Have they forgotten Thee ?

As thus I muse, I seem to be uplift  
In momentary trance, yet not to move,  
And, through some spiritual vista infinite,  
Behold calm tears upon the face of God.



## Love and Morning.

THOU art awake, my love ; so bright a morn  
Must borrow brightness from thine eyes most sweet,  
And those slant, luminous vapours, sunward borne,  
In radiance by thy smile are made complete.  
*Love is upwafted to pearl-golden seat  
Beneath the motionless pinions of the Morn.*

Slumber the hills on silver-breathèd base,  
Their quiet breath goes golden up the air,  
Their dim blue dreams are haunted of thy face,—  
They fear to wake lest thou shouldst not be there ;  
So would I dream, and have no other prayer,  
Than thus to dream of thee and thy embrace.  
*Love smiles abroad on all the azure space,  
And twines white fingers in the Morn's bright hair.*

But, no ! let slumber hold the distant slopes,  
Dimly blue-folded in luxurious rest !  
My spirit is alight with fiery hopes,  
Proclaiming that to dream is not the best ;  
My passion, crimson-pinioned like the west  
At sundown, bursts its slumbrous envelopes,  
Bearing me thee-ward at great Love's behest.  
*The goddess leans afar on lustrous slopes,  
Her head is bowed upon the Morning's breast.*

## Alexander Petöfi.

**T**HREE crowns are thine, Petöfi ; which the most  
Thou valuest I know not, envying thee  
Them all and each. Loud let the triple boast  
Of Poet, Patriot, Martyr, clarioned be  
Adown the lists of time, throughout the human host !

A wandering spirit thine, wild as the fire  
That plays behind the summer-clouds at even,  
In wanton frolic and loose-aimed desire,  
With momentary moonlight gifting them ;  
Like, also, to the barbed and bolted levin  
That scathes with current fire some forest monarch's  
stem.

The awful Fates were sponsors at thy birth,  
Of them to freedom wert thou consecrate ;  
And all wild, nomad spirits of the earth  
Were charged thy destiny to consummate.  
The wind, free citizen of earth and sky,  
Sang ever Freedom's sad, brave chant to thee ;  
The wandering summer-cloud, snow-pilèd high,  
Was symbol of more joyous liberty ;—  
The sunlight, climbing on low morning cloud,  
Its slate-black ledges slowly overbrimming ;

Or slipping from dim edge of murk-blue shroud  
Back where the sun's last burning drop is brimming ;  
Fiery prone comet, with invisible speed  
Trailing bright garments after star-bright head ;  
The thund'rous flight of wild steppe-roaming steed,—  
Their loose-maned hordes by snorting champions led ;  
All these apostles were, by fate appointed,  
To teach their glorious lore to Liberty's anointed.

Hard Penury, the hero's grim wolf-nurse,  
Was thine ; from her dry dugs thy life was drawn  
With struggles that make strong ; and like a curse  
Her blessing lit on thee. Was it not worse  
To wander homeless under the gray dawn  
Of dilatory fame, regarded less  
Than some disguised king in lowly peasant's dress ?

But, if thy fire-words fell among the great  
Unheeded, as the red leaves at their gate  
Eddy in autumn winds, it was not so  
Among the people ; and as thou didst pass,  
Or houseless pause at even by strange door,  
Within, the merry clinking of the glass  
Bade thee be fellow-reveller, and the roar  
Of rustic song saluted thee, no more  
Obscure, unknown, forgotten, but as though  
The mask from some celestial face did fall,  
Brought in with reverent welcome and proud gladness,—  
Blythe deity wert thou above them all ;—  
So bright a joy was born from out the womb of sadness.

Swift rose thy fame upon thee, as the sun  
Vaults on the bright verge of the tropic sea ;  
Nor praise the only meed thy music won,  
Warm to their heart the people folded thee,  
To every peasant-mother wert thou son,  
Her brave lad's brother.

Of the mothers one  
Could hold thee to her heart and call thee own,  
Listened with tear-bright eyes to gayest songs,  
Communed solicitous with thee alone,  
Soothed with fond smile the memory of thy wrongs.

No rest for thee, but sterner battle yet,  
Though he that in grim wrestle hath o'erthrown  
The strangling fiend of poverty and set  
Firm face to meet a slow, unhonoured death,  
Not soon the use of courage may forget.  
Now wert thou filled with Freedom's fiery breath,—  
A golden trump whereon her bright lips met—  
To every blast a gallant people thrilled,  
And gathered heart to dare the glorious deeds they  
willed.

With band heroic now confederate,  
Sworn brother of a holy brotherhood—  
Bond of indissoluble love and hate,  
The fire of youth and manhood's steadfast mood  
Were with you, facing black-mouthed guns of fate.  
Hail, gallant heart, who struggled to inspire  
Like mood in all, nor failed of your desire !

As when o'er breadth of some savannah vast,  
The hot wind breathes, and burn the patient suns,  
Unflinching from dread purpose, and at last  
A little flame upleaps and nimbly runs,  
Sidelong and forward, with pale smoke pressed on  
Before it, in red lambent ridge that soars,  
And sinks, and broadens to fierce ranks of fire,  
Tall, dominant, with loud devouring roars,  
Rank goading rank to rapider pursuit  
Of fugitive man and sorrow-maddened brute,  
In rout confused, each from its fiery root  
Exultant growing when the first had gone,  
So, at a signal, Hungary awoke  
To insurrection, brave with righteous ire  
At long oppression, whose foul trails pollute,  
Whose final clasp is death,—a people broke  
Their ancient bonds and flung afar a foreign yoke.

A moment Hungary stood free, as stands  
A wrestler, his antagonist being thrown,  
Clearing his beaded temples with hot hands,  
Yet anxious, wary, unrelaxed, alone.

Then as at cry of disappointed pack  
The forest wolves assemble, closing round  
With ravenous haste in horrible crescent black,  
New furnished ever out of shades profound,  
As though the pine-glooms spawned them on the  
ground,  
Diswombed, then ever close upon the track,

Around thee and thy gallant Hungary  
Gathered and grew the hordes of Tyranny,  
Warning with grim approach thine armies back.

Wolves band with wolves, and despots despots aid,  
Fearing their people more than alien foe ;  
At Freedom's trump they tremble, sore afraid ;  
O'erthrowing one she threatens all, they know :  
So Hungary free, a tyrant Czar dismayed ;  
He bade his hosts of lash-cowed minions go,  
A people to a people's overthrow ;  
So by the serf the freeman was betrayed.

In vain upon the heights of Seneschar,  
Through the fair morning and the torrid noon,  
Thy heroes, dead or living, strove to bar  
Th' invader's pathway, holding him afar  
From hour to hour ; for all, alas ! too soon  
Advanced the slow, resistless waves of war,  
Fatal as moves the desert's dread simoom.  
Then, wearied and despairing, fled the brave ;  
Thou and thy bravest sought disaster's boon—  
The final peace and triumph of the grave.

Strange cortege followed thee to burial ;  
No pomp of plume, or pall, or hearse was thine,  
As when some great man's costly funeral  
Winds through a city's streets in tortuous line ;  
For they that went before thee spake no word,  
No solemn music marched along with thee,

C

Of all thy followers none spoke nor stirred,—  
They, too, had tasted death's tranquility.  
Cast naked in great trench contemptuously,  
A naked corse amid the "common herd"  
Of naked corses, callously down-thrown,  
Again, as once thou wert, unhonoured and unknown.

Yet, if thy spirit poised, emancipate,  
In sorrow yet in triumph, o'er the spot,  
Thy noble heart such grave contemnèd not,  
Exulting rather in so just a fate,  
That thou, brave partner of the people's lot,  
In death from them should not be separate:—  
So lying with the corses of your brothers,  
Your black-lipped wounds might, bleeding, kiss each  
other's,—  
Needing no gilded line to designate  
Thy glory which may never be forgot.

Forgotten? Never! Till there shall depart  
The fear-frown branded on the tyrant's brow.  
Forgotten? Never! On a nation's heart,  
Thy words are writ, their music fires them now.  
Forgotten? Yes! when Hungary shall bow  
In bondage once again submissively;  
When Rome and Venice are no longer free,  
When History *can* forget thy glorious part,  
When lives no soul that loveth liberty!  
Till then, Petöfi, we remember thee.

## Song of an April Night.

**H**IGH floats the moon as white as curd,  
Uptilted, like a slender sherd,  
In the vague blue depth of the upper air :  
The light of the west is scattered and blurred,  
Loose-strewn in sheaf and in swathe of fire,  
Faint, divided and prostrate there,  
Like the wrecks of a spent desire.

The moon grows bright,  
Like slim pool in the light  
Of the morning sun,  
But the branches stand black every one  
Against the muffled west.  
The elm is bending in benison ;  
The cedar stands with arms outflung,  
Like a suppliant earnest whose soul is wrung  
With a purpose of prayer, while an awe intense  
Forbiddeth utterance. A little thence—  
Its crackled silver dimly guessed—  
A birch-tree rises with strenuous swerve  
Of trunk firm-balancing, clear, unblended,  
Each bough and each twig with its sure recurve,  
All meshed to a tracery delicate,  
Like a strong and gentle soul whose fate,  
In struggle begun, in love hath ended.



On a black bough near  
A black bird alights,  
And singeth clear, that his mate may hear,  
His song of the April nights,  
His song of the mingling lights ;  
His music is sobbing and welling  
From his eager throat, throbbing and swelling  
With the passionate tale he is telling ;  
And she, I know, sits quietly,  
Black on the bough of some black tree,  
With eyes that sparkle tenderly.  
No answer she makes,  
When awhile he is dumb,  
But the lithe bough shakes  
When she thinks, "Will he come?"

O loving bird, so welcome heard,  
I envy thee thy lot ;  
For her I love I may not move,—  
My song she heareth not !

'Twixt Bank and Island.

A SKETCH ON THE TAY.

FROM light beyond in silver fleet  
The waters waltz to a green retreat,  
Where willow-pale the ripple slips  
To shadow, dark as fir and bright  
As laurel. Where a branchlet dips  
A silver pennon streams ;—a bar  
Recumbent, black, the sunken limb  
Of ancient willow,—breaks the stream  
To silver fusion ; and afar  
On the verdant cavern's tremulous floor  
A fleet of sparklets rock and swim,  
Alight and vanish. A bright ellipse  
Stretches swiftly and breaks on the shore,  
Clasping the pebbles with shining rings,  
Like a rapture dying where it clings.

Before this emerald-carven crypt  
The ancient willow grew,  
One giant black arm in the stream he dipped,  
And one for an arch he threw :  
Of hoary green,  
He has spread his screen,  
A guardian loving and true.

## To a Camellia-Bud.

FAIR, snowy-petalled flower, demurely chaste  
As any virgin-saint, and pure as she,  
I plucked thee from the bough in trembling haste,  
With those two glossy leaves as wings for thee,  
So thou my cherub-messenger might be,  
And my warm message, 'neath thy petals placed,  
Might gain that shrine of virgin sanctity  
Whereat I worship, my beloved's breast,—  
Unchallenged passing each stern sentinel  
Who stands without the 'leaguered citadel,  
Charged every roving Cupid to arrest.

She took thee innocently in her hand,  
Unwitting thou wert laden with such fire ;  
No flower she held ; it was a glowing brand  
Cast eagerly upon a fragrant pyre  
Where lay a maiden soul, in white attire,  
That, robed in flames of conflagration grand  
And passionate, the *maiden* might expire.

Doubting, awhile she held thee in her hand,  
While I, impassioned, mused and wondered where  
Thy place would be. Amid her undulant hair,  
Where thou mightst whisper to her, unproven,

My message, and among her fancies fair  
The golden thread of love mightst silently have woven ?

But no ; upon her bosom thou wert laid,  
And, like a lily on a summer tide,  
Rose with the rhythmic motion of her breast,  
Felt her soft bosom press thee and subside.  
Intrepid blossom, wert thou not afraid ?  
Didst thou not blush, remembering my behest ?  
Insolent flower ! thy triumph I abhor,  
Thy gentle victory do I detest ;  
Grown jealous of my own ambassador,  
Fain would I pluck thee from thy fragrant nest.

Nay, rest thee there, sweet flower, and be not wroth !  
Thou art no rival, but a trusted friend ;  
Love's rage is light and empty as the froth  
That flecks the black pool 'neath the waterfall ;  
So thou be true, forgetting not the end  
I charged thee to accomplish. Do thou blend  
Thy whispering with the whispering of her heart !  
In secret dialogue do thou recall  
My image and my words, with subtlest art  
Instilling thine own beauty into all !

Plead thou for me as lovely princess pleads  
For knightly captive, lending all his deeds  
New lustre from the ripeness of her lips,  
New glory from the splendour of her eyes !  
Few be thy words, as costly-freighted ships  
Slow sailing the horizon of her thought !

O careful traitor, count for me her sighs  
If, listening to thy tale, she sigheth aught !

And, when thy tale is told, let suddenly fall  
Thine every spotless petal at her feet,  
And sing, in dying, to her, " Love is sweet,  
Her hours glide on in silent dance and fleet ;  
They beckon us and pass beyond recall,—  
So, he that gave me, passion-prodigal,  
Sheds down before thee life, love, service, all,  
To make one fairer footplace for thy feet."

Love-Blind.

**A**S they who walk in dreams, nor think  
 Their steps may lead them to the brink  
 Of danger, rapt in pleasant quest,  
 Or anxious, their brief time of rest  
 Consuming swiftly, vainly, we,  
 Upfloated from reality,  
     In golden dream communed apart,  
     I alone with thee, my heart,  
 (And thou alone with me?)

Nor thou, perchance, but I alone  
 Drank the new wine of passion, grown  
 To godhood on thy smiles, and fed  
 With thy frank graces, till there spread  
 Before me mirage-vision fair,  
 Quivering on enchanted air ;  
     And we wandered there apart,  
     I alone with thee, my heart,  
 And thou alone with me.

As sunward floats a bubble bright,  
 Trembling sphere of iris-light,  
 And bursts aloft, so rose and fell  
 (Phantom of the impossible !)

The hope I cherished, love-begot,  
That we might be, as we are not,  
    In Love's pavillion shrined apart,  
    I alone with thee, my heart,  
And thou alone with me.

## To the Men of Herzegovina and Bosnia.

**R**ISE !  
With the light of unquenchable hope in your  
eyes,  
With all fears fully faced,  
With your spirit stern-braced  
To endurance—ay, death ;  
With the breath  
Of defiance breathed low,  
As first slip of the snow  
From the summits of Alps where dumb elements know,—  
They alone,—  
That a shroud for the valley's green life they let go,—  
You alone  
And dumb Destiny know,—  
Not this Europe with half-lidded eyes,  
Watching slow  
The arena of fate,—  
What meed shall be mate  
For your valour. Then rise !

Gather !  
Swift and compact as the storm-clouds gather



Far over seas ;

Silent as these

Gather, gather,

The son and the father,

From the lone cot ye love

By the chestnut grove,

On the paths and the ways and the roads

That remember the profitless loads

Ye bore on them ; as mountain-streams meeting

Be the hurried assembling of feet

And the sound of stern greeting,

Of men marching over the street,

While a wailing, weak woman's entreating

Rises up unavailing,

Thus meeting

Gather, oh gather !

Swear !

To be free as your bright mountain air,—

To be noble as those

Immaculate snows

Of your mountains, that lie

Vestal-pure till they die,—

To be firm as those sky-pointing peaks

Whose silence eternally seeks

To instruct you, to rouse you, to bid you be men

Once again, as your forefathers were.

Swear !

By the shades of your fathers who fell,—

By your hate of the tyrannous Turk,—

By your daughters, your wives, and yours mothers,  
Your sisters, your sons, and your brothers,  
By heaven and by hell,—  
To do your work  
Well.

Swear !  
On the shrine of liberty,—  
On the trophies of the free,—  
On all patriot's blood,  
And the brotherhood  
Of the brave,—  
On the martyr's grave,  
Swear !

March.  
Steadily march !  
Through Danger's tottering arch !  
Let your tread overhead  
Move the dead in their graves,  
Until underground it is said,  
"Are these slaves  
Who march over our head?"

March ! march !  
The sanguine dawn of battle drawn  
Before you unafraid,  
Its gory gold wide unrolled,  
Before you undismayed,  
March ! march !

Fight !

For liberty, justice, and light :

Ye are chosen, perchance,

To lead the advance

Of a nation ; the torch

Of freedom is past from an Italy freed,

From a Hungary saved to your hand, let it scorch

From their haunts the foul reptiles of Tyranny's breed :—

'Tis the cause of Woman,

The cause of the Human,

And fate has decreed,

Be ye victors or no,

If ye conquer or fail,

That the cause of the right

Shall yet triumph,—if slow,

Must prevail,

Therefore, fight !

Fire !

When the foeman comes, his face to your homes,

And his cruel desire unsated—

Fire !

As the columns close

In awful repose

Around you,

Fire !

When your comrade calls

With last breath as there falls

His smoking rifle, and from his place

He falls on his face,

Fire !

In the day of hope, in the hour of fear,  
'Neath a banner victorious, or by the bier  
Of a leader,

Fire !

Refrain !  
When there remain  
No armèd foemen unslain ;  
When there stands on your lands  
No oppressor from mountain to plain ;  
When the sanguine dawn, asunder drawn,  
Leaves no cloud unamazed  
Into lustre of pearl and soft sloping of snow,  
No vapour undazed  
By new splendour of show,  
Then refrain !

*November 1875.*

## Autumn Woods.

## I.

**I**N rich attire,  
In hues of wine and fire,  
Glorious stand  
The trees on the autumn land.

Blue as blue flame—misted flame—  
Are the woodland spaces and ways  
By the russet and ruddy blaze  
Of the beeches—each bough-tip reaches  
Aloft like a wing,—by the pallid limes,  
Fading mellow to ripe plum-yellow,  
Choosing rhymes, colour rhymes,  
For the rowans, when  
They have ripened to swart sienne.

About the fields the great trees stand  
In lonely pride, imperial,  
Each holding court in splendour bland :  
The chesnut lets a gauntlet fall,  
Of tawny gold, upon the land,  
And, like a lavish plutocrat,  
Each wealthy palm he opens flat,

Seeming to dwell about a dusk  
Of saffron, cinnamon, and musk.  
The sombre oak-tree broods  
Like conqueror-monarch won to courtly moods ;  
Bronze-green remaining yet, no searing brand  
Of autumn set upon him, but a slim  
Lithe lustre all his leavage seems to rim  
Metallic ;—so might Julius Cæsar stand  
With aspect of beneficent command.

The queenly birch in vails of fire,  
The nervous aspen, muscat-pale,  
The naked ash, with leaves that fail  
And blacken,—all aspire,  
In patience, beauty, dignity,  
To worship and to sympathy.

A yellow leaf near flutters to earth,  
Lighting soft as a butterfly,  
And, dreaming a nobler second birth  
Hath befallen it, doth musing lie ;  
For the wind has whispered tales of mirth,  
And wooed it down most lover-ly ;  
And now a frolic breeze goes by,  
Whisking it merrily up and away,  
Dandling it daintily, letting it sway  
Again to the ground, and rolling it round,  
Glad for the jovial mate it has found,  
Till the red leaves join in the play.  
A wizened, tattered troop are they,

D

Curled and clutched together, and crisp,  
They drift and dance with a quiet whisp  
Along the road, and skip and roll,  
Leap and totter, and tumble and run,  
Twirling and eddying, gravely droll  
As city arabs in the sun.

The setting sun convokes

His senate proud of gorgeous cloud,  
And all beneath him smokes,  
A golden fume, from gloom intense,  
Of violet overflowed with frankincense.  
Lo ! chasm and rift, and gorge and spire,  
Whereon the molten glory breaks,  
Purple battlements crowned with fire,  
Low amber isles beaten to golden flakes,  
High amethyst spaces, faint emerald lakes,  
And over all, like a fleece outflung,  
And floating, a fiery canopy hung !

The year is dying like a queen

Who mounts, to stifle grief or guilt,  
A fragrant pyre of cedar built,—  
Of sandal-wood and sassafras,  
With gums and amber overspilt,—  
In royal robes, with regal mien,  
She waits to die alone,  
And, smiling o'er the fervid mass,  
She makes the pyre a throne.

## II.

Now the east wind blows, and a chill  
Sea-mist estranges the hill  
From the valley, lying a still  
Grey steam, outdrawn without seam  
Over the sodden ground,  
And around the damp leaves clinging blue,—  
Of a pestilent hue,  
Like breath  
From the nostrils of death.

The trees are bent, westward bent,  
As though they turned their faces away  
From the bitter breath of the wind to-day,  
Waiting till it be spent.  
All the sear  
Limp leaves and the leathern-brown leaves,  
Cling on as in fear,—  
Some falling aslant  
And lying drear  
Where they fall ; for no freak jubilant,  
No merry frolic of freedom won,  
No jovial rout leads the dark leaves about  
In mænad liberty, new begun,—  
In their places, as though on their faces thrown,  
They shiver and quiver, alone.

Like a woman standing in desolate halls,—  
The ghost of a woman,—who weeps and calls  
In a voice no mortal hears ;  
In the rags of an ancient grandeur wrapt,



In the dream of an old existence lapt,  
Swayed and wrung by her former fears ;  
A beautiful birch abideth alone,  
Her swart, small leaves about her blown,  
Her branches writhen and snapt.

Full on the flank of the phalanxed wood  
The wind rides wildly, unwithstood,  
And, charging reckless, breaks and flies  
Along its shivering tapestries.

Alas ! the year  
Is dying without cheer,  
As one outspread  
On a bier,  
Before he be dead.

III.

In tender mood  
Grey stretches of cloud overbrood  
The distance, layer on layer faint-limned  
Against each other, blurred and dimmed  
To the eastward by a dubious mist,  
Breathed inland, mingling with the brown  
Loth smoke above the phantom town.  
And overhead  
A grey, deep down is spread  
With shadows blue and meek, pale peer  
Of light through partings incomplete ;  
Through straggling separation, here  
And there the radiance strives to ooze and meet

In pools irregular and bright,  
A pallid marsh of stagnant light.  
One sole ærial schism reveals  
    A lake of ether blue,  
    Of frailest hairbell hue,  
Crowded with wreck of ivory keels.

'Twixt the smoke-blue of either shore  
    The straitened Firth lies pearly pale,  
    And thereupon there seem to sail  
    Dusk ships, with shadow-sails outspread,  
    As though they bore away the dead  
For evermore.

Like slumbering clouds of shrouded fire,  
    The woods burn dormant on the land,  
    The foremost tree-stems dimly stand,  
    Like masts half buried in a smouldering strand.  
The larch's blanching spire,  
    And all the solemn sentinels of fir,  
    Alone attend the quiet stir  
    Of reverent wind and falling leaf,  
Where each one slowly seems to tire  
    Of life, departing void of grief.

The year is dying without complaint,  
Patient as a stricken saint  
To whom this world is growing faint,  
    And in her ear  
The wind, a reverent comforter,  
Lone watching by the side of her,  
    Doth whisper solemn cheer.

**Edward I. and Sir William Wallace.**

SCENE.—*Room in the House of William de Leyre,  
Farringdon.*

WALLACE *alone, manacled and fettered, seated dejectedly  
on the ground.*

HOW sternly Fate doth set her bounds about us,  
That utmost effort may not overpass,  
Though we ride bravely, as the breakers ride  
Upon th' indomitable rocks, and roar  
Triumphant over them ; the mark is set  
Whereto the tide of our success shall come,  
And never mortal hath resisted yet  
The sure relapse of fortune. I am now  
As brave as he who won on Stirling field,—  
As skilled a captain, as wise a general,—  
Yet I am powerless as the babe who gave  
His mother pangs this morning,—a stranded wreck,  
Now spurned and buffeted of the waves that once  
Swelled brave beneath it.

Have I lived in vain,  
Leaving my country desolate with fire,  
Her nobles traitors, her brave peasants crushed,  
Dispersed, forsaken, leaderless, forlorn  
Of hope and succour, and perhaps bereft

Of their last heritage of undying hate  
And desperate valour? My staunch countrymen,  
The enemy overcame us not in truth,  
It was false friendship,—treason, treason, treason !

O God ! came from Thy hand the sordid souls  
That can betray a nation's liberties,  
And, bound, deliver to futurity  
A noble people, worthy well-bought freedom,  
For some poor private vantage? Surely such  
Are spawned in some neglected hold of hell.

'Tis such alone make liberty impossible.  
They are the loosening of the hilt and blade,  
The separation of the haft and head  
Of weapons in a battle, or the leak  
That sinks a vessel on the calmest sea.

O Scotland ! Scotland ! thou art overcome,  
And liest the helpless prey of meanest things,  
Like wounded knight upon a battlefield,  
Pressed by the knees of plundering miscreant,  
Whose gory fingers fumble for his throat.

So I must die with purpose unfulfilled,  
With vengeance incomplete, and the dear ghost  
Who now awaits me on the coasts of death,  
For whose brave soul I swore one monument  
Alone was worthy—Scotland's liberty—  
Shall spurn me, coming, for a craven knight.

*Enter KING EDWARD with WARDER.*

*K. Edw.* Bah ! there he crouches like a caged beast  
That pines for bloody sustenance, and is cowed  
Before a keeper's whip.

Insolent traitor !  
Show'st thou not to thy captor's better sport ?  
God's eyne ! to-morrow, when thou shalt be strangled  
As any caitiff, and thine entrails torn  
From thy false carcase ere thy breath be gone,  
And burnt before thee, the lewd folk will cry,  
" This beaten hound's no Wallace," and will mock us.

*Wal.* Fear not for to-morrow's pageant.  
If you have English patriots, let them come  
And learn how weak are tyrant's cruelties  
Against a dauntless spirit.

*K. Edw.* So ho ! rebel,  
Thou spur'st thy jaded courage to poor show,  
That lagged but now beneath you.

*Wal.* Dream thou not  
That fear of death or long-drawn agony  
Had wrapped my soul in sadness,—my to-morrow  
Appalled me not. I thought on yesterday.

*K. Edw.* With vain repentance and belated prudence,  
'Tis a fool's way to weep at wisdom's grave.

*Wal.* I repent nothing but my ill success.

*K. Edw.* Thou wert thy country's enemy more than  
mine;  
Thou, a rude ignorant reiver, witting not  
Of monarch's great designs, hast led thy land  
To deeper, surer ruin. Know you not

This island must be one, beneath one monarch ?  
Wales I had taken, nought remained but Scotland.  
Were I but owned superior to her king,  
The path to a united crown lay clear.  
A mad resistance brings but fire and sword,  
Incessant waves of chastisement and conquest  
Upon your stubborn people. Keep thy heart  
Bitter with such reflections : they are true.

*Wal.* If they were true, yet would I not repent  
Of aught that I attempted, knowing better  
Are pain and death and ruin than slavery.  
Yea, even sitting in this porch of death,  
Were any man to stand before me now  
And cry, " I stand the last of Scotsmen here ;  
Say, shall I serve or die ? " I'd bid him die.

*K. Edw.* Poor, mad fanatic of a fallen cause !  
'Tis well thy countrymen forget thy teaching,  
Else Scotland were a wilderness to-morrow.

*Wal.* Not so, proud tyrant ; they but learn the path  
That leads to conquest and to liberty.  
You know not yet the metal of true Scots ;  
Your commerce is with traitors. Our rude land  
Hath made us iron from her iron loins ;  
She opens to receive her hosts again,  
When evil fate afflicts them. Her lone caves,  
Her pathless moors, her glens remote, her mountains  
Are freedom's citadels, garrisoned for ever  
With her grim, desperate, deathless brotherhood.

*K. Edw.* Who have the rabbit's courage to peep  
forth  
When danger disappears—a valiant race !

*Wal.*

*K. Edw.* To-morrow, villain, shall thy quartered carcase reach Edward's power to Scotland, and make freedom smell foully in her nostrils. Wounds o' God !  
My very bones'd suffice to conquer Scotland.

*Wal. (laughing grimly).* 'Twill be a ghastly warfare,  
meeting mine there ;  
And, if they fear thee little as I do living,  
They'll prove no recreants.

*[He leaps up, and clashes his manacles.]*

**I defy thee, tyrant !**

I dare thee now to loose me here unarmed,  
To champion it for Scotland half an hour.  
God ! could I change these fetters for a sword,  
Scotland were free to-morrow. Coward, thou fear'st  
me !

Thy base soul 'neath its harness does mine homage.  
My chains are wrought of iron, thine of terror,

Burst thine, great monarch, if thou canst, as I do.

*[Clashes his manacles together desperately, and breaks one of them. He springs towards the King, but fails to reach him.]*

*K. Edw.* Bah ! thou art worse than traitor, thou'rt a fool.

The wager is not level : thou'rt a caitiff,  
A criminal condemned, and thy lost life  
Wouldst fairly set 'gainst mine—wouldst have a king  
Thine executioner, and spirt thy blood  
On a Plantagenet ? Warder, bring fresh chains,  
And see they be no crockery. *[Exit WARDER.]*

*Wal.* Niggard fate,  
Dost thou deny me still ? Be bounteous once,  
And pay back all the debt thou owest me  
And Scotland with a single severed link  
Of this accursèd chain !

*[He struggles to break from his fetters, but without success. KING EDWARD watches him with a scornful look, but intently.]*

*K. Edw. (as WALLACE pauses, exhausted).* Dost learn  
at length

My bonds are sure as Fate's are ? so my hate  
Shall prove, like her decrees, inexorable.

*Wal. (to himself).* Ill fate ! ill fate ! I fain had forfeited  
A score of victories, but to have met this man  
Once fairly in a battle, eye 'gainst eye,  
Scornfully vigilant o'er the clash of blades,  
Till one sword, fiercely hewn through half the man,  
Shot death's portcullis down behind his soul.



*K. Edw.* Presumptuous, impious man, who rail'st at  
fate

And majesty alike, thou feel'st to-morrow  
The vengeance of thy king and of thy God.  
Death shall release thee as a scourgèd man  
Is loosed to fresh tormentors ; deep thy place  
'Mid rebels and marauders blasphemous  
Already is prepared, the chains are forged  
Upon hell's anvils that eternally  
Shall bind thee burning to thy brimstone bed.

*Wal.* That's blasphemy. Implacable tyrant, take not  
The terror of th' Almighty on thy tongue,  
Lest thou be prophet of thine own condition.  
Leave it thy priests to phrase it daintily  
Into my dying ear. And yet, be sure,  
I fear not you nor them. My shrift is said,  
Low spoken 'mid the silence and the dark  
Of this lone chamber, in the ear of God,  
Who listens ever by the heart of man.  
And then I dreamt—it flashes on me now—  
A glorious dream, a dream divine and glad,  
As though some angel from the hand of God  
Had brought it for my solace. Noble land,  
The day approaches that shall make thee great  
And free for ever. That which I have sown  
Another reaps. So be it !

*K. Edw.* Thy success  
Is ever with thy *dreams*. I trust my plans  
And slowly-ripened policy—not my dreams.  
The bloody share of battle hath passed through  
Your stubborn land ; the golden seed I sowed

Shall spring in loyalty. To-morrow dies  
The last man durst resist me.

*Wal.* Seeds that die  
Are multiplied.

*K. Edw.* The dead wolf litters not.

*Wal.* A dying man's prophetic, the pallid sea  
Of death reflects him unfulfilled events ;  
Its awful surge murmurs oracular.

*K. Edw.* Reason is man's best oracle, clear thought,  
Patient sagacity, and mature design  
His surest prophets ; they can execute  
That they predict. They prophesied me conquest  
Of Scotland ; subjugation of her people.  
They prophesied thy capture and thy death,  
Yea, they gave tongue unto the very time,  
And cry, " He dies to-day."

Iron the traitor !  
The smoke of his own bowels shall go up  
Against his nostrils, as the piteous smoke  
Of English homes rose in the face of Heaven,  
And cried for vengeance. It shall be to-day.

[*Exit* KING EDWARD.]

*The WARDER advances towards WALLACE warily.*

*Wal.* Fear not ; my fit is over, and my quarrel  
Is not with such as you. I'll be as patient  
As any lady when her tiring-woman  
Puts on her bracelets.

*Warder (as he puts on his manacles).* Would thou'dst  
strangled him !

*Wal.* What? villain! traitor!

*Warder.* 'Tis the place for them.

Art thou not called a traitor?

*Wal.* 'Tis the English,

It seems, for patriot. I was loyal

To Scotland and to liberty. Thou'rt a traitor,

Hating thy king.

*Warder.* Is revenge unlawful?

He had my father hung.

*Wal.* How com'st thou here,

In this ungrateful office serving him?

*Warder.* With this foul service I redeemed my life.

*Wal.* And durst thou not revenge thyself? Thou hadst  
Brave opportunity but now.

*Warder.* I dare not.

Snug i' the dark I keep my courage warm,

And it crows bravely. But before his face

It cringes vilely as a captured wolf.

Speak not of this, sir! Can I serve you, sir?

*Wal.* Yes; you may trust me. Bring me the Latin  
Psalter.

*Warder.* I will, sir. Thou art learned as well as brave,  
And godly too. I would I had thy bravery

When thou art done with it; which will be shortly.

[*Exit* WARDER.]

*Wal.* This would be torture for a very fiend,—  
To hate and still to fear.

I was ungrateful

To God who made me, and have now received

Reproof and favour from an enemy.

There is a fortune that defies misfortune,

And that was mine, to be the instrument  
Wherewith great deeds are done ; to be made brave  
With a brave woman's milk ; to be instructed  
Early in nobleness ; to be inspired  
In generous youth with freedom's passionate breath ;  
To learn from grave men life's solemnity ;  
To learn with brave men light regard of death,  
And deep regard of honour and loyalty ;  
To be once worthily beloved ; to know  
The sacred joys of home ; yea, to be torn  
Heart-bleeding from them, till one's soul became  
Compound of fire and iron, fit to bear  
Victory, defeat, betrayal, torture, death.  
God, in the hour of my extremity  
I thank thee, having made this fortune mine,  
And fashioned me to this ; grant me Thy strength  
And valour to the end, and my glad soul  
Shall hymn the loudest in Thy choirs to-night.

*Curtain falls.*

## In Moness Glen.

### *ACROSS STREAM.*

THE slim-shot firs toward the zenith tower,  
Their bristly summits frore against the blue,  
Each taper shaft erect of cedarn hue.  
'Twixt two a rival larch, with fingers fine  
And silvern, skyward points, and deftly spreads  
Green web of leavage, wafted over heads  
Of birch, and oak, and ash. The birch o'erleans,  
In ambery dalliance, that broad oak that screens  
Half-way her silver-belted stem, yet she  
Smiles over on the brilliant ash beneath,  
That hillward leaneth back defiantly,  
Like warrior with hand upon his sheath  
Before he draws ; the light from off his leaves  
Hath overflowed, and from beech branches falls  
On plumes of fern, and sprays of bramble sprung  
From moss-green nooks. No freak of light is flung  
On this tall sapling ash, who grieves,  
His root by the waters, his topmost leaves  
Not midway up the height ; like a Tasso sad  
He leans in the shadow, meekly mad,—  
By the foot of the steep the streamlet brawls.

*THROUGH THE WOOD.*

The spider-lines are dry ; one floats  
Iridescent and loose from this hazel leaf ;  
And yonder, 'twixt hazel and fern, there gloats,  
On the reckless dance of those golden motes,—  
Hung like a traitor, still as death,  
Dark knot in midst of his web of sheen,  
Passive swung on the innocent breath  
Of the morning,—a spider ; his hawsers fine  
'Twixt fern and hazel shake and shine.

The sun burns round through the larch-bough net ;  
The dewy grasses glisten yet ;  
Like noble foes are the larches met ;  
They pause for signal, tree by tree,  
Their weapons crossed in courtesy.  
One, as remorseful, in the shade,  
Drops sullenly a suppliant blade,  
And, as a king might intervene,  
The bright sun strikes his lance between.

### Love without Hope.

**I**N a green woodland place, afar from men,  
I found a fair youth sorrowing, and then  
Scarce knew that he was Love, the blythe, wild boy.  
No longer seemed he wanton ; sad and coy,  
As any weeping maid's, his glance had grown ;  
His pale lips, pressed together, missed the joy  
That honeyed them erewhile, and let a moan  
Go by unchallenged of that mirth-fed mouth.  
Still, like some marble statue in the south,  
Without a stain, with head upon his hand,  
And stripling elbow propped on polished knee,  
He mourned, and picked, as fell upon the land,  
Sweet-rinded fruit from Memory's bitter tree,—  
Sweet-rinded fruit that tasted bitterly.

I cried, "O Love, art thou a mortal grown?"  
(For still he moved not, and still wept alone,  
And took alway that fragrant, bitter fruit,  
And crushed the flowers beneath his anguished foot);  
"Immortals wax not old, yet thou art grown  
From boyhood since I saw thee." Then he sighed,  
"My wings of Hope are shorn." Upon his bare,  
White shoulders then I saw a bleeding track,  
And knew that bleak-souled, pitiless Despair  
Had shorn the snowy pinions from his back.

### An Evening Recorded.

**B**UT now the hills stretched leonine,  
Luxuriant in bronze light, that spread  
Refulgent over flank and head,  
Elate with amber wine.

Then slowly failed the light from brow  
And loin of each drowsy hill,  
The shadows slid away, and now  
The passive range is folded still  
To slumber ; those green branches stir  
Across its cloud-soft lavender.

As swift as when a strong wind-blows  
Grey ash from off a smouldered fire,  
Till one hot ember suddenly glows,  
An eastward cloudlet's toppling spire  
Is kindled rose,  
And, with contagion swift,  
Sheds on its luminous gift  
From bluff to cape, from cape o'er tideless bay  
Of eastern cloudland, till a marl of rose  
Burns on its beaches grey.

Now, as I think to turn me to the west,  
An awe withholds me, as a worshipper



In some dread Deity's temple is opprest,  
When from the holy to the holier  
He passes onward, fearful he may see  
The splendour of the very Deity,  
And die, consumed of glory ; for the eve  
Seems solemn as miraculous vision sent  
To some rapt prophet : turning, penitent  
And humble, the full rapture I receive  
Bracing my awe-full spirit to sustain  
A pleasure, tyrannous as pain.

On the high borders of the brimming sea  
Of that wide western blaze, disorderly,  
Bluff courier-clouds draw rein and dumbly stand,  
A reverent retinue, plashed tawnily  
With tarnished splendour, ranged on either hand  
An infinite vista opening to the core  
Of sundown, whose intolerant light dissolves  
Itself to darkness, and as swift evolves  
Vertiginous brilliance, blotted evermore  
With dancing discs of shadow, deftly spun  
Before the very sun.

Unanchored lie a thousand skyey craft,—  
A skiff, reed-slim, atilt on waveless tide ;  
A long, gold-laden barge ; a burning raft,  
With glowing spars and splinters strewn beside ;  
Great purple galleons, with golden prow  
And keel afire,—all stirless at their posts,  
Abiding down the range of fiery coasts,  
Whereof a tenuous promontory now

Bars the sun's disc (above it and beneath  
Bristling with rapid beams),  
And now he seems  
To take the molten morsel in his teeth.

Fold thy wild pinions, my desirous soul,  
That would outface such glory, and would claim  
This splendour for thine own for evermore ;  
Impatient to unroll  
Thyself to like immensity and flame,  
An equal splendour from dusk shore to shore ;  
Go veil thy face for shame,  
Abandoning thy godlike hardihood,  
Since on the rapture of a poet's mood,  
Fell sense of human blame.  
For all the air is solemn with delight,  
And sacred with repose.  
Across the bright  
Ethereal calm  
Is breathed a silent psalm ;  
Coldly immaculate,  
High glacial spaces wait,  
And far clouds worship in their saintly rows.

## A Twilight in July.

THE sky grows deep and darkly blue,  
The trees turn sharply black,  
The twilight zone hath won the hue  
Of autumn apples, when they lack  
No hour of ripeness, for the green  
Blends downwards to ripe yellow,  
Growing fruit-mellow,  
Until it seems, and yet is not,  
Warm as the core of a cloven apricot.

The night's cerulean blanches azure-pale  
In its descent, and fails to aqua-marine  
Above the apple, and thereon the trees,  
Unstirred of any gale,  
Are clear inlaid,  
A carven tracery of jade,  
Save where, unmoved of any breeze,  
A lavender-cold cloud doth lie delayed.  
Beneath the eaves of night  
The timorous white stars shake like dew,  
They seem to doubt if it be right  
To swim in that faint blue,  
Or tread the shallows of departing light.

Red lights burn low on the phantom land ;  
The nearer steady,—far they seem to flicker  
And wane and gather thicker.  
Near at hand  
The barley whispers ear to ear ;  
As children talk of ghosts and graves,  
Its rustling, grey, invisible waves  
Confide a tale of fear.

### Under the Ash.

NOT Cleopatra in her summer tent  
Dreaming of Antony,  
'Neath purple hangings languid with rich scent  
Of her imperial presence, amorously  
A-couch on creamy satin, and content  
To hear the sweet-contrived music die,  
And leave far lulling of the Nile alone  
To staunch the silence with broad monotone,  
While a blonde slave, with bosoms ivory-white,  
Ceasing awhile her feathered fan to ply,  
Breaks not her sultry vision of delight,  
Can boast a fitter fashioned tent than I  
Beneath the bower of this obeisant ash,  
Asylum of green shadows and retreat  
Of silence from the wooing of sweet sound,  
Whose lightest kiss would grieve her, and abash  
Her maiden soul—a fort the summer heat  
Assaults in vain, and compasses around  
With his bright tides, incredulous of defeat ;  
A quiet chapel-shrine in which I lie  
Still as a marble knight in effigy,  
Save that my eyes with loving gaze explore  
The branch-built roof, mark the rude arches join  
The one sole pillar, trace the slender groin,

Greet the lit grasses through slim-pointed door,  
And watch the chequered lights wave on the floor.

Green fane is this wherein a god might lie,  
And listen to the summer's sultry hum,  
The voice of birds that will not yet be dumb,  
And to the stir of light-winged tapestries  
That sway, leaf-woven green transparencies  
With azure interstice, with cunning ply  
Of leaf on leaf inwrought mysteriously,  
And, listening, let immortal life go by.

## A Sunset.—Midsummer.

A LONG the horizon lay a blue mist-zone,  
And thereagainst the far tree-tops stood black,  
Crisp-broidered thereupon : and two dark spires  
Showed thorn-like, and the taller pierced the zone  
To that murk band, whereon an orange cope  
Burnt mellow through the north. Its eastern flank  
Of blue phantasmic vapours was beset,  
And thence there headed forth to that bright sea,  
Clipt by a gorse-warm glory, one scant shoal  
Of cloudlets, floating minnow-wise. The west  
Shot from irregular continent of cloud,  
Sharp promontories on a primrose sea.

## A Moth.

A CLUMSY clot of shadow in the fold  
Of the white blind,—a moth asleep or dead,  
And hooked therein with still, tenacious hold,  
And dusky vans outspread.

Laid on my hand a wonder of dull dyes,  
A sombre miracle of mingled grain,  
Grey etched on grey, faint as faint memories,  
Dim stain invading stain.

Each wing-edge scalloped clear as any shell's,  
With rippled repetitions ebbing in  
Rhyme within rhyme, as when cathedral bells  
Remit their joyous din.

Complete is it of broken laceries,  
A pencilled maze of blending greys,  
Mosaic of symmetric traceries,  
Assorted in sweet ways.

Black velvet grainings upon pearly ash,  
An elf-wrought broidery of hues they stole  
From the black moss-blot, and the lichen-splash,  
From birch or beechen bole.



Strange-headed thing, in ruminative rest  
Stirring its flexile antlers dreamily,  
With great ghoul-eyes and sable-feathered breast,  
In sleep's security.

"There rest thee, and sleep off thy drowsy fit,  
Till night shall triumph in the dusky glades,  
And mass her conquering glooms, then rise and flit  
A shadow through the shades!"

My Love: A Conceit.

MY love, O love, is no *vin ordinaire*,  
Poor to the drinker's taste, and apt to sour,  
Too long in the cellar or to summer air  
Left open for an hour.

Nay, rather, 'tis a costly strong *liqueur*,  
Whose worth is reckoned by the seasons past ;  
Drink when thou wilt, love, thou shalt find it pure  
And potent to the last !

### Music Medicinal: A Thank-Offering.

I WOKE, an outcast from a dark and deep,  
Tyrannical and dank domain of sleep ;  
About my bounden heart and brain did creep  
Slow, slimy, reptile things from out those pits of sleep,  
And, with their trail upon me, I arose,  
While clung to me a passive, dumb despair,  
Cold to my soul as drownèd woman's hair,  
And wandered blindly, seeking for repose.

Sweet tides of music flowed about my soul,  
Dear, dim-remembered strains played solemnly :  
Like waters glad they trickled, gushed, and stole,  
Swept on, and hushed my soul's perplexity.  
Warm winds of harmony blew about my heart,  
Sweet-breathed as from a sacred meadow-ground.  
From a dank shore black, noisome things depart ;  
I lie on moss, and roses grow around.

## A Dust-Heap.

A MOUND of rubbish cast before  
A rich man's door ;  
A worthless lath-and-plaster heap,—  
Things waste and cheap.

Yet barefoot children search therein,  
And treasure win ;  
One bears for banner, overhead,  
A paper shred.

One, smiling, pipes on timber mute  
For magic flute ;  
To yonder urchin scraps of board  
Are lance and sword.

That rag for *her* is garment fair  
For queen to wear ;  
That sherd of delft will serve him for  
A man-of-war.

Stay, wheel of Time, and let them play !  
Pass not away,  
Sweet glamour, from their eyes, for fear they see  
The cold reality.

**Spring waltz.**

**T**HE light  
Has drawn his cloud-mantle before his lips,  
He lingers all day in a willing eclipse ;  
His might,  
Like a wise king, calmly restraining ;  
The fairy rout  
Of the flowers wait in doubt,  
For they hear not their monarch's conquering shout,  
And they know not his calm refraining.

## Amaryllis.

A MARYLLIS, Amaryllis,  
Deadly cousin to fair lilies ;  
Six green scimitars in hand,  
As with evil purpose planned,  
Tell me what thy secret will is,  
Amaryllis, Amaryllis.

Amaryllis, Amaryllis,  
Envy not the lustrous lilies ;  
Thou great flame-flower darkly burning,  
Crimson petals, writhing, turning,  
Tell me what thy secret will is,  
Amaryllis, Amaryllis.

Amaryllis, Amaryllis,  
Injure not the lady lilies ;  
Thou art lolling towards the dust,  
Thy lithe serpent-tongues out-thrust,  
Tell me what thy lust and will is,  
Amaryllis, Amaryllis.

Amaryllis, Amaryllis,  
Thou wouldst slay the saintly lilies ;

F

In thy thirsty throat one jewel  
Lurks in splendour queenly cruel,  
Tell me, tell me, what thy will is,  
Amaryllis, Amaryllis.

Amaryllis, Amaryllis,  
Thou art more to me than lilies ;  
I will kiss away thy jewel,  
In its splendour queenly cruel ;  
Thou shalt whisper what thy will is,  
Amaryllis, Amaryllis.

## Summer.—Sabbath.

THE jangling church-bells in the distance make  
Unconscious music, and unwillingly  
Conspire to one quaint, melancholy tune,  
Alternate boom and tang and tinkle, changed  
To tang and boom and tinkle ; thus afar  
The tumult of a clamorous age may play  
Sweet airs upon one's spirits. Why despair  
That this new age may ring its jangle soft  
To future's, with like noble discontent,  
Discordant made?

Now Nature's brightest calm environs me  
More solemn-glad than storms of organ praise  
That flood long aisles, and seem to shake the shafts  
Of stained light athwart the golden dusk  
Of some cathedral's distance ; the blue hills  
Sleep, wan with splendour of the patient light  
That lies on all green foliage, unafraid  
Of breeze's playful bustle in the boughs.  
Which loves it best? The fair acacia tops,  
With interspace of shadow softly drawn,  
In likeness of long, broken sunset isles?  
Or sunward side of massive tower of plane,  
Built like a thunder-cloud against the blue?



Or laurel top, broader than bastion wall,  
Thatched o'er, impervious, with leaf-wrought mail?  
Or daisied lawn, with mimic armament  
Of sword, and lance, and thyrse, and bayonet?  
That poplar all a-tremble, like blown reach  
Of sunlit river? Or tall oak, that wears  
The light about him as a warrior wraps  
A jewelled cloak about him at a court,  
With half-contemptuous pride, yet willingly,  
As symbol of his fame?

*If God be like His light, He loveth all,  
And with His smile can make them beautiful.*

About the weeping elm the robins play,  
Cling to the pendant boughs, and clinging, chitter  
Light gossip to each other; seem to peep  
And wonder at my stillness, knowing little,  
My voice shall yet be longer heard than theirs,  
Small critics of the hour. Now peccant Meg  
Leaps up beside me, feigning penitence  
For riot made without a robin's nest,  
In lieu of full confession licks my hand,  
As sign of absolution takes her seat  
Upon my knee, regardless of my book  
And half-writ paper. Now an embassy  
The elm is sending me; the ambassador,  
With blazoned breast, approaching, perches first  
On slender rose-spray, swinging under him;  
Important, bold, with due *aplomb* he makes  
His reconnaissance (Meggy's ears are up).  
Ho! who's afraid? Not he! Full confident,

After deliberation quite mature,  
He plumps upon the lawn, and hops breast-deep  
Among the daisies ; hops but thrice, and stops  
In pose sagacious ; with a bold, bright eye  
Scans me and mine ; with diplomatic skill  
And speed up-reckons us ; probes our intent,  
Decides more close inspection hazardous,  
Flits sidelong to a further bough, and there  
Composes his report. Brave little bird !  
How would mine image mirrored on thy soul  
Move me to laughter, and perhaps a moment  
To grief, reflecting on the impotence  
Of greatness at the door of littleness,  
Through which it may not enter. O blythe birds !  
Think kindly of me ; yet, if ye should prove  
A band of cynics, I will love you still,  
And freely will forgive you, since I pray,  
“ Dear God, forgive our little thoughts of Thee.”

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Our Journal: I Thank-Merry.

Our Journal: I Thank-Merry.

W. E. is waken from a dark and deep,  
Tremor and dark domain of sleep;  
And my human heart and brain did creep  
And sin, spite things from out those pits of sleep,  
And on her soul upon me, I arose,  
This day to me a passive, dumb despair,  
And my soul as drowned woman's hair,  
And waited blindly, seeking for repose.

And this of music flowed about my soul,  
And the remembered strains played solemnly:  
The notes find they trickled, gushed, and stole,  
Sung on, and lashed my soul's periphery.  
Then words of harmony blew about my heart,  
Sweet-breathed as from a sacred meadow-gate.  
From a dark shore black, noisome things drifting  
: It is now, and roses grow around.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

bluish cast before  
the door ;  
-DANGER BEING-  
to all cases

SECRET. SECRET.  
-DANGER BEING-  
to all cases

SECRET. SECRET.  
-DANGER BEING-  
to all cases

The WARDEN advanced toward the door.

WAL. Your not ; my fit is not as  
is not with such as you. I'll be a part  
As surely when her living-voice  
Forth from her bosom.  
-DANGER BEING-  
to all cases

did her then in, and  
for ever to be, and  
v.

## A Day a-Dream.

**T**HIS day is all enigma to itself,  
And like a ship of all the winds forgotten,  
That trendeth with the trending of slow tides,  
And follows unknown currents unawares ;  
Or, like a maid who hath not seen herself—  
Being blind—and yet is meekly beautiful,  
Who smiles unconscious, uninitiate  
In her own beauty, lavish of rare graces  
As though they were but common things and poor,—  
So drifts the day, calm, blind, and unconcerned  
For its own beauty ; passively adorned  
Of its neglected suitor, the lorn light,  
Who lingers bashful out o' doors, and haunts  
Low eaves of cloud and cloud-lids left ajar,  
While all about blue distances wait dumb,  
Blue-muffled over-lips, and misted woods,  
Hold breath, as though in kind conspiracy  
To keep fate's secret from the drifting day.

## Beneath her Balcony.

I KNOW those shadows cut acute  
By moonlight on the stone ;  
I stand beside the jasmine root  
That grows, but not alone ;

For bold clematis climbs thereby,  
All purple-passionate,  
His fearless blossoms brave on high  
All storms of love or fate.

Ah ! there above your balcony  
They meet, a wedded bower ;  
They twine and grapple tenderly ;  
They linger hour by hour.

Her stars are white on her green night,  
She trembles passion-chill ;  
His passion-cup he holdeth up  
And drinks that she may fill.

Wake, love ! The moon, the maiden moon,  
Dreams love-dreams in the west ;  
The silver slim of yon cloud-rim  
Doth bourgeon to a breast.

Appear, appear, and show the moon  
A beauty more than hers !  
Appear, appear, and let her swoon  
Behind funereal firs !

The flowers sway in sweet embrace,  
And thou, my love, art come ;  
All else is dark beside thy face,  
And I—am dumb.

### The Year at Bay.

**T**HE old year brightens with remembered youth :  
November dallies in a dream of June ;  
Her woods are haunted of a hyacinth mist  
Around bare branches and wet leafage glows,  
Jasper and jacinth, holds of vigilant flame,  
Haughty arrayal of retreating host,  
With blazonry of banners unabased,  
Yet doomed to slow defeat, in proud content  
Of valour in its own sublimity.



## Snow, Cloud, and Steam.

THE morn  
Is solemn with deep snow,  
Dumb with a white bewilderment, and awe  
Of unaccustomed calm.

Field after field  
In seamless white apparel, and beyond  
Hill behind hill, colossal castings run  
Together, mass to mass, and all acouch  
Beneath one motionless mantle of smooth snow.

Heaven's azure blanches round th' uprisen sun,  
That seems to fuse the æther to white light ;  
An indiscriminate glory, 'mid precipitous,  
Bright eminences of ascending cloud,  
Self-reared from out its mass of yellow murk  
That cumpers the horizon.

But now  
Across mid-distance, on a shining track,  
Sun-caught, there crawl to meeting two long trains,  
So under-rimmed of radiance that they seem  
Diswheeled to slide a chain of flashing sleds  
Upon a silver rail. Their funnels pass,

And either volumed trail of vapour slants  
Deliberate and long, up that bright air,  
In slow unswathing of its zincy folds,  
Whose incandescent edges slowly fray  
And lingeringly faint out upon the air.  
(So may a parting spirit, without fear,  
Yet loving this fair world, in leaving loth,  
Pass out to the invisible from his place;  
Yea, this frail steam is emblem of our life,  
Invisible in origin and end.)

Linger, bright vapours, whirling leisurely  
Above the white and patient wastes of snow ;  
Cradling the careless splendours of the morn  
Upon your reeling wreaths, and vanishing  
'Gainst inaccessible glories of steep cloud !

## Three Pools.

THREE rain-pools left upon the hill,  
Dark pools abiding clear and still,  
Submissive to another's will ;  
Built round of barrier rock, and held  
Meek hostages of rain ; compelled  
To slow captivity,—each one  
A sombre mirror, gloomy green,  
Where over furze and grasses lean  
And see a world without a sun.  
A bramble, growing in his place,  
Can see in one his shadow face.

The very wind goes over them,  
And shakes the grasses growing through,  
The dry, ripe grass's barren stem,  
As though it knew,  
Or feared to know, some secret thought  
Those solemn, stranger pools had brought  
For hermit-contemplation there,—  
Some deep and undivined despair ;  
And yet, they lend a subtle grace  
Of soul to this unconscious space,  
Seeming the conscience of the place.

## The Valley of Dead Souls.

'T WAS like a spectral valley in the moon,  
In whose perpetual silence death is dumb,  
Aghast herself at that vast sepulchre  
Of the unborn that never shall be born,—  
Of those that have not lived, nor ever shall,  
The place that I approached—and yet it seemed  
Phastasmal, immaterial, as though  
Impalpable it were, but none the less  
Inevitable and indestructible  
Of any power, or human or divine :  
No light was there unless the blue-numb roof,  
That stretched from ridge to ridge, eternal cloud,  
Were luminous ; it rather seemed my sight  
Was self-illumed, so lustreless was all,  
And so absorbed of solid glooms, that still  
Were swallowed into vaster glooms,—and yet  
So deeply clear its darkness, so immense  
Its visible extent !

About my path,  
Strange shapes of death and mockeries of life,  
The wraiths and wrecks of all created things,  
Weird, ashen *simulacra* of all forms,  
Plant, animal, and human ! at my feet  
Strewn on a ghostly grass, as grey as hair—

And deep with ashen dust, there seemed to lie,  
Half buried in that grey cinereal drift,  
The bones of perished beasts and skeletons  
Of men ; and at my foot a skull,  
Across whose gnawed and battered countenance  
The shrivelled lacery of a spider's web,  
Hung loose and clamped about its central mesh,  
Its famished occupant, himself a skeleton.

I raised my eyes therefrom—and lo ! a wood,  
A dwarf and eldrich forest of scathed trees,  
Riven and split, fantastic caverned boles,  
With bony arms and branches antler-stiff,  
And starveling, blighted stems of wizen bark,  
Tagged with a meagre lichen, their lean forks,  
Retaining here and there a straggling tuft,  
That was, or seemed, the relic of a nest.

Above the spare screen of the stricken trees,  
A wide and desolate giant gorge uprose,  
Gaunt as a glacial valley in the night,  
As though a lava-torrent then had stayed,  
Eternally extinct ; and thereupon  
The ruins of long silent centuries  
Had fallen and paused for ever where they fell.

There stood a wan thing by me there, that seemed  
Half ghost, half skeleton, emaciate wraith,  
With spiritual famine nigh consumed,—  
And he, as though I questioned him, replied,  
“ I am a dying soul, a pilgrim now  
And victim for the shrine of Dissolution.”

"Can spirits die?" I cried, "and that we deem  
Immortal come to nought?" "Indeed it can;  
Nothing's eternal but the infinite."

"Do then the great and noble perish thus?"

"Not so, their end is opposite to ours,  
If end 'tis fitly called that is not end  
But consummation rather, the rapt lapse  
Of finite flowing into infinite."

"And you?" I asked; for to this haggard soul,  
Marred with spent miseries, with extinct desires  
Degraded and deformed, my spirit yearned  
In pity and concern. He answered me,  
"Their life is swallowed in a greater Life;  
Our death is buried in a deeper death."

He pointed up the valley, and I saw,  
Laid at the feet of its final precipice,  
A huge sarcophagus, marmoreal, black,  
And pond'rous. "Yonder is the Tomb of Death!"  
Awed by the mystery of the vision, I  
But whispered. "Wherefore, spirit, wilt thou go,  
With thy past sorrows silent on thy face,  
Up this disastrous valley to an end  
Eternal?"

"The worst," he said, "is over.

"Hast thou" (his dwindled fingers seemed to touch me)  
"Been face to face with death?—I do not mean  
When languor makes us almost willing captives,—  
But hast thou known an hour when Life was proud,  
And flung his challenge valiantly to Death,

And closed in wrestle for thee, and thy soul  
Stood still to abide the issue? If thou hast  
Thou mayest in some slight measure gauge the pain  
Of that last contest, when a falling soul  
Rallies to bay upon the brink of doom,  
And closing with his invisible adversary,  
Tries one last fall—and fails.”

I turned to weep,  
“Pity me not,” he shrieked, as in contempt;  
“’Tis over—and I know my highest hope  
Is, not to be.”

“Tell me, lost soul!” I cried,  
“The story of thy being.” Thus he told me:

. . . . .

He ceased, and from the grim, cadaverous smile,  
Wherewith he ended I, revolted, turned  
And thought I heard weird laughter from the shade,  
As when one dry leaf rattles on a bough  
In winter. And he said, “No longer now  
You pity me or love me. It is well  
From places inaccessible to God’s,  
That human love should shrink.” And so he passed,  
A slim grey phantom through the spectral wood,—  
A moving shadow up those solitudes,  
Waste, motionless, eternal.

## Summer Clouds.

**D**RAWN by sunbeams from the sea,  
 Up to chilly heights of air,  
 Slowly closing, gathering there,  
 In the still solemnity :

Floating fragile, snowy forms,  
 Ever shifting, ever new,  
 On the bosom of the blue,  
 Heedless of the coming storms :

In a dream, across the face  
 Of the moon ye pass, and grow  
 Caves of silver light, and show  
 Her beauty, as the bridal lace :

In a purple luxury,  
 Basking in the sunset's fire,  
 While the sun in regal ire  
 Sinks into a burning sea :

Spread upon the forceful wind,  
 Leaden darkness o'er the earth,  
 Falling, quenching all its dearth  
 With a moisture cool and kind !

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### Madonna of the Broom.

SHE leans on her broom-handle in the sun,  
A maid—of twelve, perhaps—in russet-brown,  
Bareheaded, with a simple, womanly gown,  
With eyes a-dream, as though her work were done  
Or the day ended that is but begun :  
She heeds no passing shows of earth ; they drown  
In some deep vision of her soul that none  
May fathom, yea to her a mystery,  
Who with an awed, unconscious gravity  
Beholds alone : and so the little one  
Seems a child-sybil solemn with the doom  
Of nations, or madonna wond'ringly  
Waiting her motherhood. Now with her broom  
Meekly she goes to sweep a humble room.

## Through the Wood, alone.

**M**URK the night,  
And the flight  
Of the bat is heard, unseen.  
Has there been  
A murder here by night?

For there drips  
From the tips  
Of the boughs a somewhat wet :  
Is it the sweat  
Or the blood of a soul that drips?

And their touch,  
It is such,  
As of that which should be hot  
And is not,  
But clammy and limp of touch.

And the pool—  
O you fool !  
'Tis of water, and not of blood,  
It was mud  
That you slipped in by the pool.

## Vain Light.

THE mist rolls low on the hills—  
A dark grey fleece of vapour, motionless,  
Adherent to their clammy brows; it chills  
Their drenchèd flanks, to nude distress  
Abandoned; and the straitened tarn between  
These hills lies grey as slate : now unforeseen  
And far some exiled splendour reaches faint  
The grey recesses of the volumed cloud,  
Where, captive and no longer proud,  
'Tis baffled to a sanguine taint.

### A Bluebottle.

**I**N the sunlight, in the shadow,  
    Buzzes, bustles,  
    Fumes and fustles,  
That bluebottle fly.  
    Oh, good gracious !  
    Time is precious !  
Don't you stay. Good-bye !

What's the stir, sir ?  
Lost your purse, sir ?  
    Or mislaid your specs. ?  
Got an old hat  
For a new one ?  
Shares been sold at "certain ruin" ?  
    What sharp troubles vex ?

Has your son been rusticated ?  
Has your daughter wrongly mated,  
    Lacking your consent ?  
Are your talents underrated ?  
Patent been anticipated ?  
What, dear sir, has aggravated  
    You to this extent ?  
Is your wife's rich uncle shabby ?  
Have you overpaid the cabby ?

Still abusing, random cruising,  
Still unflagging, zig-a-zagging,  
Circling, swooping,  
Spiring, looping,  
Unabating, oscillating ;  
Stop a moment, pray !  
Unavailing ! He goes sailing  
(Heaven be thanked !) *away*.

### Spring's Procession.

FIRST snowdrops come, as gentle damosels,  
Downcast, as though  
They did lament the snow  
And rang its silent requiem on their bells,  
Or drew a saintly penitence from the wells  
Of their own purity, too pure to know  
That they are fairer than the frost  
And holier than the snow.

Next come the crocuses, a jocund choir,  
And there upfloats  
A chant from their sweet throats  
We hear not ; clad in purple of desire,  
And stoled in white of peace, and golden fire  
Of joyance, these, the heralds jubilant  
Of spring, in chorus to the sun,  
Upbreathe their golden chant.

Then trip the trim hepaticas ; demure  
And meek are they,  
As village children pausing in their play  
To listen, where the light falls pure

In the church porch, and innocently sure  
That none there is to summon them away  
From that calm shrine of sounds  
That won them from their play.

And after these the sister jonquils walk,  
All chastely slim,  
As though a solemn hymn  
Were all their thought and all their holy talk ;  
Each head in trance upon its slender stalk,  
Each soul sequestered in a vision dim  
With glory, all outbreathed from that  
Unheard, mysterious hymn.

And after these the pale primroses press,  
Each one a maid  
Whose heart no fears invade,  
Yet holding each one by the other's dress,  
In loving company, as they would guess  
Together the Spring's wonder, unafraid,  
Shameless in innocence, and bold  
In very lowliness.

Thereafter comes narcissus, and beside  
The daffodil,  
As with a common will,  
Together go a bridegroom and a bride,  
Outbreathing fragrance they would keep and hide  
Each for the other only : yet they spill  
Love's odours on the air, and all  
Spring's promises fulfil.

### A Child of Shame.

A MOTHER lonely in an attic sat  
And, looking at the cradle that her foot  
Rocked gently as she laboured, thought of that  
Which was, yet should not be, the tender fruit  
Of passion's early Eden, ere it broke  
And she to sense of wickedness awoke.

For VENUS the deceitful hath the power  
To drug sharp Conscience to a pleasant sleep,  
Who, having overslept the perilous hour,  
Wakes, eager the lost citadel to keep,  
Then, seeing how her fraud has foiled his force,  
Casts his vain keys to ruffianly Remorse :

And he, with his two fellows Shame and Fear,  
Enters the inner places of the soul.  
Cruel inquisitors are they, who sear  
But heal not, who oppress without control,  
Fell masters of the pincers and the knout,  
While for their signal Murder waits without,

Till, with a cry as of a babe new-born,  
Young Love awakes within the tortured heart  
And, smiling on these with an innocent scorn,—  
Till they like startled plunderers depart,



And even Shame is banished hindermost,—  
Wins humbled conscience to resume his post.

There was a love-light in that mother's eyes,  
    Chastened of sorrow to pathetic grace ;  
And, when she paused in working, quiet sighs,  
    Half-hushed in presence of that sleeping face,  
Stole from her, as reluctantly let go,  
And born of mingled happiness and woe.

Yes, happiness, although she strove to still  
    Its pulse from beating in her guilty breast,  
It would abide therein, despite her will,  
    At Nature's bidding born, the loving zest  
Of motherhood,—upon the wounds of grief  
Still pouring its importunate relief.

Her thoughts would wander to sweet nights of spring  
    When the pure moon seemed priestess of their love,—  
Last night she saw her drive, a desolate thing,  
    Drifting abandoned on black clouds above  
The city roofs ;—and all beneath her light  
Was calm with mystic pleasure infinite.

And twilight summer eves she thought upon,  
    When day and night seemed one, as their desire,  
And the enamoured sun would not be gone,  
    But burned behind the north, a fragrant fire  
Through all the night ; so, with a blended will,  
They wandered and at dawn they lingered still.

From these she turned her mind, but still she thought

“How pleasant evil is ! how sweet is sin !

Though, being past, we reckon pleasure nought

And mourn the bitter crop we garner in,

Yet dear will seem those unforgotten ways :

I cannot yet repent me of those days !

“Nor can I hate *him* wholly yet, nor rate

His passion wholly crime in him ; he seems

So worthy woman's love, for one too great,

Too great for me at least, a form my dreams

Bid welcome ever, though a pain will mar

My thoughts of him. Ah me, the things that are !

“I cannot boast thy beauties, little one

Nor amid praising mother-friends proclaim

Thy infant feats, nor set thee in the sun

Of a proud father's smile, that so the same

May answer his upon thy baby face ;

For thou, alas ! art one with my disgrace !

“No other love hast thou, but mine alone,

And none have I but memory of his

And hope of thine, when still there shall be known

To thy child-heart no thought of shame, that is

Too surely thy inheritance. Ah me !

Wilt thou still love me when I tell it thee ?

“Would God that I could keep thee innocent

Of that sad knowledge, even as thou art

This moment, so the holy sacrament

Of love in peace we might partake with heart

Devoid of fear or shame ! that I could bear  
For thee and me of shame the double share !”

The sleeping baby gave a little cry,  
And swiftly down beside the cot she knelt,  
And, listening to his breathing anxiously,  
With gentle hand his little cheek she felt :  
Solicitous, the mother bent above  
The child, her shame forgotten in her love.

## Moon-Rapt.

O MOON,  
Celestial Sappho in a swoon  
Or saintly trance,  
Moving as motionless  
In footless dance  
To a melody unheard,  
Whereby we guess  
Is controlled thy trance  
And thy peace conferred.

Thou art maiden purely ;  
No Endymion  
Ever yet has won  
Aught but kisses cold,  
Set demurely  
On the marble mould  
Of his boy-brows :  
Thou dost keep thy vows  
As of old.

A virgin priestess thou,  
Thou dost behold  
From out thy spiritual calm

All earthly passions ripen and grow cold,  
Nor dost thou withhold  
    From us the balm  
Of fond belief, although the vow  
    Thou hearest, yet thou wilt not tell  
                    What befell  
Those of old  
    Who loved as we love now.

Thou dost enfold,  
    To-night all being in thy dream ;  
    Cloud, and wood, and lake,  
And the mystic wold,  
    Of thy trance partake,  
    And *We* seem  
To stand one-souled,  
    A portion of thy dream.

## Two Friends: a Modern Ballad.

THE clock has not struck in the city square ;  
Not yet has been tolled the midnight hour  
In that southern city, standing fair  
In the wide moonlight, by the clock on the tower.

Two men are alone in the moonlit square,—  
Loungers, 'twould seem, as they chat and smoke ;  
Yet would they seem to be waiting there,  
Waiting to hear the clock's first stroke.

Listen ! one speaks : " It is better so,  
Since we love the one woman this must be.  
I would not win her from thee, and I know  
Thou couldst not seek to win her from me."

" I would, and I would not," the other says, low,  
'Tis a fear has driven me on to this end :  
Where passion will lead us we cannot know,  
And I feared I might be false to my friend.

" If thou wert favoured, a jealous fiend  
Would walk as a shadow 'twixt thee and me ;  
I should feel my spirit ashamed, demeaned  
Unfit to walk as a peer with thee."

“And I,” says the first, “if so preferred,  
Would feel a Judas at every kiss :  
I should know thy pain, as though I heard  
A cry in mine ear ; so it comes to this.”

None speaks, as they both look up to the face  
Of the clock, whose sharp hands seem to wait  
In a distant pity, as knowing the space  
Between them is measure of human fate.

But no ; they creep slow, like the shears of death,  
When the thread of life is laid between,  
And all is silent, except the breath  
Of the men, while the smoke with indolent mein

Ascends and breaks, and mingles aloft,  
And is lost in the lucent air or the gloom  
Of the tower's great shadow ; far and soft  
There comes faint odour of orange-bloom.

“Art ready?” cries one ; “we must start level  
And fair, whatever shall be our goal  
We go together to God or the devil ;  
We bear one sentence, soul with soul.”

“Thy hand!” says the other. “So henceforth never  
Shall hand unclasp or friend depart ;  
Death unites whom love would sever ;—  
Lower, lower, 'twill miss my heart !”

The moon hangs low o'er the city roofs,  
A silvern face in a golden dream,  
A far street echoes to reckless hoofs,—  
Time and the Moon go on supreme.

The hands of the great clock flash like one,  
A chime goes tingling across the square,  
Twin flashes, shots and groans like one,  
And a slow smoke wading up the air.

Another chime through the silence tingles,—  
Two bodies lie where men should stand ;  
They have fallen together, their life-blood mingles,  
Face is to face still, and hand in hand.



## A Bather.

LIMB by limb have I outslid  
To the sun and the wind,  
And I lean  
A naked delight to myself,  
And a visible friend once again ;  
And the wind, and the sun, and my soul  
Love my body, all chastely.

As a blind man who touches a statue  
The wind moveth o'er me, and learneth  
The mould of my body ;  
And the sun-light, mute gazer all-seeing,  
Hath espied me, and cut a curved shadow  
On the smooth sand beneath me,  
Warm-resting on shin, flank, and shoulder,  
White-flashing on knee, hip, and elbow,  
Fitting closer than ephod about me,  
While my soul  
Leans contentedly back in my body,  
And holdeth the cool cup of pleasure,  
With a smile, to her lips and to his ;  
For her pleasure is his,  
And his hers, for the moment ;

For a while they are lovers  
Again, as afore-time.

Like an Adam I feel—

A mere man—

The prime offspring of nature,  
Content and complete, unafraid ;  
A new wonder for earth, sea, and heaven,  
With a soul floating idle,  
Peace-anchored within me,  
With joy-ripples lapping all idly  
And brightly about it ;  
Like a great water-lily that gathers white petals together  
Above its bright heart,  
A snow-globe asleep on the gold-meshen gloom of a river ;  
Like a single lamp swung  
In the dusk of an odorous temple,  
A-drowse in sweet darkness.

Like a young Greek with eyes avert from death,  
To whom glad life doth seem an evermore  
Of sunshine and blue waters,  
I lean, a living statue, on the sands.

The waves woo me ;  
They toss a million gems from crest to crest ;  
In dext'rous sport they dance in line, and come  
In shifting ranks that fail not ;  
They flout the rocks with wanton foam ;  
Up the shallow bay they swim,  
Each an elastic ledge of light,

Failing to a snowy flounce,  
And stretching crystal hem  
Toward my feet.

. . . . .

On rocky cape I stand,  
A column erect on the limit of the shore ;  
My stunted shadow crouches on the rock ;  
My image plunges downright in the pool,  
And crumples with the crumpling of the wave.

Th' unsteady water-planes  
Sway slow, and rock and bulge and swamp  
The weedy boulders ; float the glistering tangle,  
Flush the near channel foamily, gush and smack  
Their slippery limits, souse the podded weed  
And trounce it brusquely, mightily resorbed,  
Back-sucked to swirling gullets of the sea.

A shock, a fusion of sounds and half a terror,  
Till the light breaks again overhead,  
And I shake my face free ;  
All alone with the sun and the sky, in the arms of the  
ocean,  
Thine, all thine, great sea,  
Trusting thee lover-like,  
Lover-like master of thee,  
Mounting thy waves, overcresting thy foam,  
Cleaving thy seamless robe of waters,  
I bound on thy steeds, a sure rider,  
Dealing thee stroke for stroke, buffet for buffet,

Smiling glad scorn back upon thee, with joy in thy greatness,—

Made mine for the moment.  
So, on, on, on,—sweet as the struggle of lovers,—  
We will carry our battle ;  
Wave after wave bursting over,  
Heaving me strongly above it ;  
Wild in the laughter of waters,  
Great with the grandeur of billows,  
Glad in thy greatness, proud in thy power,  
Till I pause in the rapture  
And feel myself flung  
And swung to thy swaying,  
As a weed by the rock,  
All resigned to thy will—  
To thy womanly will—  
That would make me thine own,  
That would make thee mine all,  
That would bind or embrace me,  
Would kiss me or kill.

And so at ease  
Recumbent supreme,  
In sweet, perilous pleasure,  
In daring joy,  
Am I rocked to the rhythm  
Of thy passion's tune,  
Responsive and plastic  
To thy great will.—  
All thine, thine, thine, great sea !

Like a will-less soul  
In the grasp of fate,  
Grown sublimely calm,  
Upborne beyond despair,  
I this pleasure take  
From the hands of fear,  
From the soil of terror reap delight.

Ha ! thou syren sea,  
Thou dost woo me well ;  
But I know thy will  
And thy cruel ways ;  
Bravely wilt thou bear  
Living limbs, and warm ;  
But thy stoic heart  
Letteth dead things drop  
Voiceless down thy depths,  
Whence no cry can come.  
Life, warm life, for me,  
'Neath the sky and sun !

Landward, then ! I am thy quarry ;  
Let thy billows be hounds  
With the wild huntsman, Wind,  
To cheer them and chide them !  
So I plunge fearless on,  
Challenge thee blythely,  
With thy pack at my heels—yea, before me already ;  
For they follow me thick as a woman's reproaches  
On a lover departing unvanquished ;  
But, like these,

They hold me no longer,  
But futilely break in brief passion of foam  
With a suppliant mien,  
As in plaintive appeal,  
Cringing landward.

At last  
By the dank locks of seaweed I seize,  
And heave myself, panting,  
Back safe to my rock-seat.

The wind has a welcome,  
The sun has a greeting,  
The earth and the heaven  
Prepare the guest-chamber ;  
Handmaiden breezes  
Invisibly attend me,  
The broad-shimmering sea-face  
With inscrutable smile resalutes me.

O soul, soul of mine !  
Canst thou not stand  
Erect in the universe,  
Free, unashamed,  
With God's light on thy face  
And great Nature beneath thee, unmoved ;  
Looking forth unafraid  
On the fathomless ocean of being ;  
Bold to trust it again,  
For ever enamoured  
Of its mystical movements,  
Its dumb, mysterious benediction ?

**Love on.**

**N**OT through true love is any woman lost,  
Whatever tales they tell  
Of faithful woman loving to her cost,  
Saying, "She loved too well."

Love on, true hearts, if ye can dare love's pain  
And bear his yoke alone !  
To love, be sure, is your eternal gain,  
And shall for all atone.

But let your sacred pity, as ye cry,  
Nailed to his cross, above  
All lesser passions, fall most plenteously  
On those who cannot love !

## A Harvest-Day.

ALL overhead a seamless web of cloud,  
Dove-grey and semi-luminous, and beneath  
Bright corn-field and green clover-field, afire  
With honey-scented bloom, and turnip dark,  
And pale, ripe grass unrippled, spreading far  
(Dame Nature's dainty-coloured coverlit)  
To east and west and southward. On the north,  
Meeting the land with mutual embrace,  
The grey-illuminated sea. Her countless lines  
Of ripples slowly shoreward separate,—  
Each rising to a long, calm, glassy ridge,—  
Breaks suddenly, with low murmur, into surge  
And slides translucent up the sand to leave  
Its scattered foam-bell momentarily,  
And trace a wavering margin of wet sand ;  
Or, where the dark, prone rocks to seaward fall,  
Moves in upon them, tossing plume and jet  
Of insolent spray. So, with as sudden change  
As when at wave of ancient wizard's wand,  
Th' unconjured scene dissolved, or fair mirage  
Swiftly dislimning over torrid sands,  
The grey cloud-web disparts and disappears,  
And the clear azure and the golden sun  
Are veiless, save for delicatest weft



And woof of vapoury filament, conspiring  
To subtlest forms, of spiritual being  
Significant.

Now look upon the sea,  
Palely blue-lucent, one great undulent gem,  
Up to the snowy fringes on the shore  
And purpled shadow-belt that meets the sky,  
And suivant round rough headlands, hollow bays,  
Sharp rock-spines stretching seaward, and the great moles  
(With cliff-fronts shadow-scarred and light-suffused)  
Barring with slumbrous hulls the utmost east ;  
While westward one protuberant promontory  
Above the horizon heaves his grassy bulk,  
With grim front silhouetted on the sea.  
And inland, just beneath us, in a fold  
Of tortuous ravine, white-lichened towers  
Peer proudly from their ambush, ash-begirt,  
Stout vanguard to tall ruinous walls the tempest  
Has with long siege beleaguered, making rent  
And breach irregular and huge, where once  
Loophole, or door, or window was (as death  
Makes gaps unseemly in the habitation  
Wherein the human spirit sojourn makes),  
Yet leaves fantastic fragments poised aloft  
Miraculously. In the furthest west  
One far hill's heathery brow o'er his near fellow  
Looms mist-dim lavender, softly sun-entranced,  
Like poet in sweet topmost swoon of thought,  
While he, like some blunt, honest citizen,  
Careless of public knowledge of his faults  
Or virtues, lies displayed, each stain of peat,

Scar of bare rock, or shingle-grey moraine,  
Pale, sunny slope of grass, or wandering glow  
Of purple heather (poured abroad like wine,  
Lavish libation to the god of day),  
Nude to the gaze, and sharply visible.

Now all the sunward lands bask in broad light,  
From the far zone of gentle eminences,  
Whose fields are strip and patch of gold and green,  
Whose woods are clinging masses o' verdurous cloud,  
Asleep upon cerulean shadow couches,  
To the near field before us, tumultant  
Gently against the distance, as though swelling  
To seasonable ripeness, where the grain  
Falls to the busy tattle of the "reaper,"  
'Mid rustling toil of sunburnt harvesters.

The merry shuttles of the grasshoppers  
Work ceaselessly amid the sunny grass ;  
Each little singer in a gold-lit glade  
Weaving his little chanson ; even as I,  
Beneath this dome of azure infinite,  
Whose pavement is the dædal earth and sea,  
Chameleon-hued, make thus my little chant.

## Duty: A Psalm.

**A**N eternal and inviolate vestal,  
By the altar of man's heart she stands  
Feeding its spiritual fires,  
A stern and perpetual priestess,  
Clad in a robe of lucent purity.  
Beneath her breasts is a brazen girdle,  
Her head is bound with a fillet of brass,  
Immovable as fate her countenance,  
Clear her accents as the call of song-birds,  
Mystical often her utterances,  
Ambiguous as the chant of the Pythian ;  
But she remains solemn, bright, immutable,  
With the knife of sacrifice in her girdle  
And a scourge of knotted iron in her left hand.  
When she speaks the soul's cathedral is silent ;  
Its long and lofty aisles listen,  
The glowing windows hold their golden breath,  
Pillar, shaft, and archway await the coming of that  
Serene but impassioned solo.

Sublimar than an Alp she stands,  
Majestic with the majesty of eternal snows ;  
Her breath is a divine flame,  
Her glance the lightning of the Supreme ;

The anger of her eyes is everlasting,  
Her smile unfathomable, infinite,  
Awful in its appearing,  
Ineffable in its presence,  
Terrible in its departure.

“Where shall we meet her, that we may worship?  
Where shall we assemble, that we may see her pass by?”

She is common, I tell you, as the air,  
More humble and universal than the grass ;  
Her sandals are set in the dust of the highway,  
Her robe toucheth the mire of the street ;  
She shuns not the darkness of the moor,  
She walks pure amid the pollution of sewers ;  
White beside the forge,  
Clean amid the dust of factories,  
Upright and ruddy by the desk and the counter ;  
Undeafened by the clang of hammers,  
Undizzied by the whirl of countless spindles,  
Or the ceaseless sithing of unresting bands ;  
The pen stains not her fingers,  
Nor plough, nor sword, nor sceptre harden her hands.  
To each man she speaks in his own tongue ;  
Her offerings lie on all altars ;  
Her knees have bent at every shrine ;  
She hath overthrown all idols ;  
There is no image she hath not cast down ;  
And she remains immaculate, inviolable and virgin.

**Passion: A Dream.**

ONE sleepeth in the shade of the vineyards,—  
The autumn vineyards,—  
The grapes hang black about her  
From the leaf-roof, fire-woven and wan,  
Drooping for love of her lips,  
Dull with the languor of desire.  
On her breast and her throat  
Waver and wander faint leaf-shadows longing to wake her,  
Yet fearing lest she should awake  
And départ,  
And no longer  
On smooth rounded breast and soft throat  
They could wander.

Scarlet poppy, black-hearted, and purple clematis  
Her listless hand crushes, unwitting, amid her black hair,  
And her fingers push upward the chaplet  
Of orange-leaves bright,  
Where the flowers are enwoven.

The skin of leopard engirds her ;  
She, being the swifter and fiercer,  
Hath slain him ;  
Though her flesh is more mellow than fruit,

And her lips kiss each other,  
And smile at their sweetness,  
And there,  
Where, like crumpled fire, a vine-leaf falls  
And lies between her breasts,  
The skin is soft and swartly golden,  
And amber-brown circlets of shadow  
Move musk-sweet upon her.  
Let her sleep ! Let her sleep !

### Eve's first Moon-rise.

#### AN UNRECORDED LEGEND OF PARADISE.

ONE day alone dwelt man in Paradise,  
Walking as in a vision, unamazed,  
Yet raptured, with innumerable delights  
Attended and forerun, for evermore  
Where'er he turned, some fairest sight or sound  
The most melodious seemed in ambush there  
Against his coming. Wearied with delight,—  
If such content be weariness, which trusts  
To infinite stores for ever at command,  
And knows no fear of loss, or limit set,  
Or term appointed,—he at length reclined  
Beneath a willow by a brooklet's side,  
Whose pouring waters, garrulous with joy,  
Told its glad story to the listening tree  
That leant, a rapt, eternal auditor ;  
And opposite, in ancient cedarn gloom  
Recluse, a bird sang, till an answer trilled  
A-top a solemn-hearted sycamore.  
Then Adam thought, "No voice has answered mine,  
Alone am I, and none attendeth to me."  
So, drowsy with the stream's discourse, he slept ;—  
At waking Eve was with him.

. . . . .

All day they fared through Paradise, and passed  
From pleasure on to pleasure; he the first,  
Wise with the wisdom of a day, and glad  
Tenfold in her delight, which being hers,  
Seemed only then his own, reborn, repaid,  
In rapture of her loving eyes, that held  
Concentred beauty of a universe,  
Vital, responsive, tender, infinite.

At eve they watched together in mute trance  
The extravagant, exhaustless festival  
Of splendours wake and widen through the west,  
When the great sun seemed spilt on ledgèd cloud,—  
League-long, his light unwoven and unwound  
To golden strands and drift of fibred fire,—  
Irrevocably through the firmament  
Dispersed, abandoned, and sublimely spent.

So watched they, hardly witting golden lapse  
Of the slow light, until the quivering disc  
Of the great orb beyond far, numb, dead lands  
Went down, and left but mellow fume of light,  
Faint as a fragrance to pervade the west.  
Then Eve, regretful, whispered, "Will he come,  
Strong as at morn again behind the hills?  
Or is he passed from us for evermore?"  
Then Adam, "Nay; to-morrow will he come,  
As glorious as to-day." "When is to-morrow?"  
"Now comes the night, when every creature rests,  
And after that the morrow and the dawn."  
"But the light goes, shall we no longer see



Each other's eyes? The shadow on thy face  
Deepens; oh, go not as the sun has gone!"  
"Nay, love," he said, and pointed where the moon,  
Behind her tremulous lattice, bright'ning clomb;  
"Behold this tender memory of the day,  
This calm and flawless hope of future days,  
Whose smile I deemed the most serene and fair  
Of earthly visions, till our eyes had met.  
Thou dost not fear?"

Then Eve, "I fear no more."

Sunday Morning.

**F**AIR is the face old Nature wears,  
 When blow these holy morning airs,  
 As though all being breathed its prayers  
 Straight up to God, and almost unawares.

We praise thee not, O glorious sun,  
 Who makest all things glad and fair,  
 Waking the song-birds every one,  
 And glistening on the birch's hair,  
 That she unbindeth to the wind,  
 That like a garment graceth her,  
 Lest our warm praise, to words confined,  
 Should bear cold message from the mind  
 That waveth silent thurifer.

We praise thee not, O glorious wind,  
 Who bendest all the shining grass,—  
 Who through the waving firs dost pass,  
 And wake sea-memories in the mind.  
 Thy breath is holier than the mass,  
 More pure than sacramental shows  
 Thine inspiration unto those  
 Thou teachest ; yet no hymn we raise,—  
 Our joy is better than our praise.

And Thou, who art beyond, behind, within,  
Above, beneath, without this universe,  
The origin and fount whereat begin  
All creatures, and the centre whence disperse  
The infinite modes of being, yet the goal  
Whereunto all being hastes; soul in the soul  
Of spiritual lives, Thou fairest form

That fairest shapes deform, and beauty mars,  
Inadequately beautiful; the warm

Deep heart of all, more steadfast than a star's,  
Whereon, snow-cold, our human love would fall;  
Great Life, whereon our action seems a pall  
Most deathly; Thou immaculate, pure face,  
Whereon our holiness would cast disgrace;  
Infinite mind, of whom we cannot think,  
Saving as that beyond the furthest brink  
Of thought transcendent; awed in bright amaze,  
Thee we dare worship, but we dare not praise.

## On Helvellyn.

## RED TARN.

THOU and the one grey dwelling near thy brink,  
Each makes the other lonelier, being there,—  
Each unto each an added loneliness,—  
Each saddened by the other's weariness,  
As though of each the other still would think  
In barren sympathy, and to his prayer  
Breathe mute amen; so solitary both,  
Mourning, 'twould seem an age-forgotten link  
To your lost fellows, hopelessly separate  
From your own kind, so excommunicate  
From kindred being, as by some past oath  
Irrevocable. Yet be cheered! The sun  
Who sees that sombre image, grey as the stone  
Upon the grave of Hope, in thy still breast  
Reflected, on those far peaks every one  
Plays with light-finger, as a separate tone  
Deliberate from world-organ keys he pressed,  
Compelling some melodic unison.  
Rejoice, lone tarn, in silver-sheeted rest,  
To all estrangèd spirits make thou known,  
"In the Divine, at last, shall we be one."

## On Helbelyn.

*FROM THE RIDGE.*

**S**O now we crest the sundering ridge and face  
    (The lonely tarn a faded memory)  
    A multitudinous glory of great hills  
Of giant birth, a jubilant, kingly race,  
    Above whose brows, benignant and sublime,  
Dwells the soft, strata'd light, in sovereignty  
    Assured and sacred, for their lordly wills  
    Are lapt in some melodic trance, that Time  
Doth fear to desecrate; an ecstasy,  
Whose fair, immortal aspect strangely awes  
The soul of Change, so stealthily she draws  
    The vision from us, fearing it a crime.

### A Lover Poet to a Lark.

I WOULD I were like thee, most glorious bird,  
Now seeming a dark centre to the brightness,  
And now a shining centre to the dark,—  
Now art thou lost in light, and thy bright song  
Transfuses all the ether, as thy soul,  
Untethered from thy body, had become  
Free being, musical, ubiquitous.

Teach me, wise bird, thy wondrous alchemy,  
Transmuting all the sunlight into song :  
Yet can I guess the secret of thy power,  
We can exchange the passes of our craft,  
And name the open secret, naming Love.

**MUIR AND PATERSON, PRINTERS, EDINBURGH.**

**EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS**  
**OF**  
**"ROSAMUND: A TRAGIC DRAMA,"**  
**BY**

**HENRY BELLISE BAILDON, B.A., CANTAB.**

**AUTHOR OF "FIRST FRUITS AND SHED LEAVES."**

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**From "The British Quarterly Review."**

"'Rosamund' is a drama of really considerable merit. Two at least of the personages breathe and act—the two women, Rosamund and Alma. This is not the Gothic Rosamund we know from Gibbon, who is a woman more like Froude's Mary Stuart, or the Lucretia Borgia of tradition. Mr. Baildon's Rosamund belongs to a much purer, more crystalline type of her sex. But she is truly dignified, interesting, and consistent throughout. She is well contrasted with Alma, her only intimate friend, and her hand-maiden. The love scenes between Alma and Peredeo, a chieftain under King Albain, are fresh and natural; and there is a very graceful lyric sung by Alma after her undoing by her lover."

**From "The Scotsman."**

"What we notice chiefly, however, here as elsewhere, is the pure and unmistakable dramatic tone, and the thoroughly dramatic manner in which the flux and reflux of emotion is sustained. For really what is palmed off upon us under the guise of dramatic poetry is often quite the reverse of dramatic, having neither proper beginning, middle, nor end, in any of the speeches; and the ordinary business of the piece seems to be gone into for the purpose simply of giving talkative ladies and gentlemen an opportunity of airing fine sentiment and striking representative attitudes, after



which they retire one by one like the singers at a public concert. The performers, in fine, are meant to speak only, not to act. But here we have flesh and blood humanity,—full-fleshed and full-blooded, it is true,—but speaking always naturally, though with sufficient poetic feeling and dramatic emphasis to give warmth and dignity to the representation. The allusions all tell more or less directly on the significance of the plot, and the incidents on the development of the individual characters. Then, over and above the directness of the address, there is wonderful heartiness and energy in the give and take of the dialogue, and the colouring and illustration are always to the point. With regard to these individual images, we may quote a passage to show that Mr. Baildon has not lost the felicity of expression which we noted in his previous volume."

#### From "The Graphic."

"'Rosamund: a Tragic Drama,' by Henry Bellyse Baildon, B.A. (Longmans), is one of those plays which make one regret the present state of the stage. A century ago it would have been performed, and some noted actress would, very likely, have made her mark in the principal character; for whenever the Lombard queen comes on the stage, the poet seems to receive inspiration from her presence, and the language rises at once—sometimes even to the verge of sublimity. Take, for example, these speeches: 'Now must I steel myself to play my part,' ending Act II.; the speech in Act III., Scene 2, after Alboin's exit; and Rosamund's final lines. Indeed, it is a good play, and not wanting in poetry—there is one delicious bit, spoken by Peredeo, which begins

'The gentle, low monotonous complaints  
Of wood-doves—loving in the quiet firs.'"

#### From "The Glasgow News."

"Mr. Baildon writes clearly and effectively, and has produced a most readable and interesting drama. It is short, and throughout graphic. The scenes are also short, each one contributing to the progress of the story, and each leaving behind a distinct and vivid impression. Many of the positions are very dramatically conceived, and a uniform pitch of sustained power is kept up from the beginning to the end. The story is simple, but gives scope for the delineation of the working of many passions. The manner in which it is treated shows that Mr. Baildon possesses

many of those characteristics that make a dramatic writer, and that his imagination is rich, yet always finely tempered and subdued. . . . We hope to hear more of Mr. Baildon; for he who is capable of producing 'Rosamund' is capable of doing a really great and lasting work."

**From "The Edinburgh Daily Review."**

"In 'Rosamund: a Tragic Drama,' we are carried back to the spacious days of great Elizabeth. It might have been produced by some of the second-rate men whose activity distinguished that fertile epoch; and it would have done them no discredit. The plot is wild in its character, but it is regularly contrived; its parts stand in due relation, the characters are well discriminated, and are each fitted with appropriate parts in the dialogue, and through all there glows a noble fire of passion, there throbs a great rush of energy. No one can turn over the pages of the book without coming upon evidences of a capacious imagination, great freshness of feeling, remarkable wealth of ideas, and an equally remarkable command of language."

**From "The Aberdeen Journal."**

"We have read this drama with interest and admiration. The author is evidently a man of great ability, fine taste, and high culture. More than that, we venture to say that he is also a poet. Our readers know that we do not make such an assertion lightly; we think we shall be able to justify it. Mr. Baildon has chosen his subject, if we are not mistaken, from Gibbon. The story is a painful one, and we shall not attempt to tell it: he has told it himself with grace, reserve, pathos, and power."

**From "The Dundee Advertiser."**

"We hail this volume, although it has its faults, as a return to a better and more Shaksperian style of writing dramatic poetry than has prevailed for some time."

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LONDON: LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO.

**EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS**  
**OF**  
**"FIRST FRUITS AND SHED**  
**LEAVES."**

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**From "The Scotsman."**

"In his preface, which is a brief essay on poetry, the author points to the cultivation of the beautiful as the great work of poets, as of all other artists. We are inclined to think that he is in this wanting somewhat in breadth, not so much in describing the beautiful as the true aim of good poetry as in limiting the scope of the beautiful. And when his poetry is turned to, there is found just that extension of his principle for which we would be inclined to contend. The author has, plainly, wide sympathies,—he could never be a poet if he had not,—and he has a keen appreciation of the sweet and true. There is no metaphysical mystery-making in what he writes, no catering for base passions, no forgetfulness of the dignity of the art for which he is illustrating. There is a strong individualism which might become a defect, but in its present development serves to lend a high tone of earnestness to the poems. There is infinite tenderness and delicacy too, and there is a simplicity in most of the pieces, which adds greatly to their charm. Take, as an instance of this, the short poem 'Ferns.'

'Ye dwellers on the moorlands,  
In woods, by joyous streams,  
Curling to kiss the water  
That flowing silver seems ;

'In shady glens ye gather,  
With plumage tapering tall ;  
With graceful-drooping tresses  
Ye deck the ruined wall.

'Ye raise no odorous blossoms,  
 No flowers of sprightly hue  
 Of azure, gold, or purple,  
 To shrine the diamond dew.

'But with a magic shaping  
 No colours could enhance,  
 Ye grow in constant beauty,  
 And matchless elegance.

'Grace guideth every fibre  
 That creepeth through the green,  
 The work of Beauty's fingers  
 In every curve is seen.'

It will occur to everybody that but for one line that piece would be perfect in the simple beauty of its description. In other of the poems of a more ambitious character, there is manifested a power of rivetting the attention and of inspiring the reader with much of the writer's passion. He touches the solemn and the tragic as he touches the tender and the true, with a fine vigour, in which strength and gentleness are fitly joined."

#### From "The Graphic."

"(The author) seems to possess many of the qualities which go to make a poet. He has much lyrical power, and one uncommon property—that is, a full appreciation of the true value of syllables, in accordance with the rules of English prosody, so well laid down by Dr. Guest and Mr. Skeet. . . . 'In Memoriam' is a good portrait, and 'David's Victory' has also pleased us. . . . The author's prose essay is one of the best parts of the book, if it were not for that horrible word *unreliable*."

#### From "The Inverness Courier."

"The work possesses the merit of freshness and purity of style, and may claim kindred with the older and more catholic models. In the midst of poetry, much of it really beautiful, that tends to mere refinement of expression, it is encouraging to meet with a writer who combines definite thought with a manly, clear, and practical utterance. The spirit of many of the poems may be illustrated from these first stanzas of 'Hope-Song':—

'Clear-singing lark that dost arise,  
 Undaunted under raining skies,  
 As though the sun with glad surprise  
 Did thee awaken.

' Though falls the rain on flat and slope,  
The season's sunny horoscope,  
Thou singest with a deathless hope  
And faith unshaken.

' Rain-chilled upon her lowly nest,  
Thy mate is sitting care-opprest  
So thou dost sing, and may'st not rest  
For any sorrow.

' Sing on, brave bird, and soar on high  
Shed down thy dew-bright minstrelsy,  
Thy loving mate shall make reply  
On sunny morrow.'

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